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Welcome to iCreate

Meet the team

Find out what they create on their Macs



Stephen Ashby, Senior Staff Writer

I use my Mac a lot for photos, so I tend to play around with them using iPhoto, as well as third-party apps like Snapheal and FX Photostudio, which are excellent.



Freddie Harrison, Senior Staff Writer

My trusty MacBook Pro and I have been recording musicians for years. I've used a lot of different programs to do so and broke a lot of mics and instruments in the process!



Jonathan Wells, Designer

I got my first Mac when I started university. My first creations involved a lot of photography and illustrations, so Photoshop and Illustrator were used a lot.

It almost sounds a little clichéd but creating a gift for someone, even as small as a greetings card really does show that you care. What's more, when you actually sit down to do it and really think about what the recipient would appreciate and make something you're sure they'll love, it gives you an incredibly satisfying feeling. In this issue we've got a great feature tutorial on creating amazing greetings cards using iPhoto and we would urge you to give it a try. It really is a great way to celebrate a birthday or just show someone that you are thinking of them. Following on from the creativity of card creation we have a great feature profiling some of the apps that can take you beyond iLife; better photo editing, cooler movies and amazing musical projects are all in easy reach with these apps and what's more they don't cost a fortune or involve a steep learning curve. On the practical side of things this issue we have a brilliant feature that will teach you all of shortcuts you need to become a Mac genius. There are so many cool ones that you'll need to print out the excellent PDF poster we've added to our free disc this issue. Once again we also have yet another stunning batch of creative tutorials covering all of your favourite apps and some tasty review kit too. Enjoy!

SIMM



Editor's pick

Making a greetings card is a great way to show off your creativity

"Better photo editing, cooler movies and amazing musical projects are all in easy reach"

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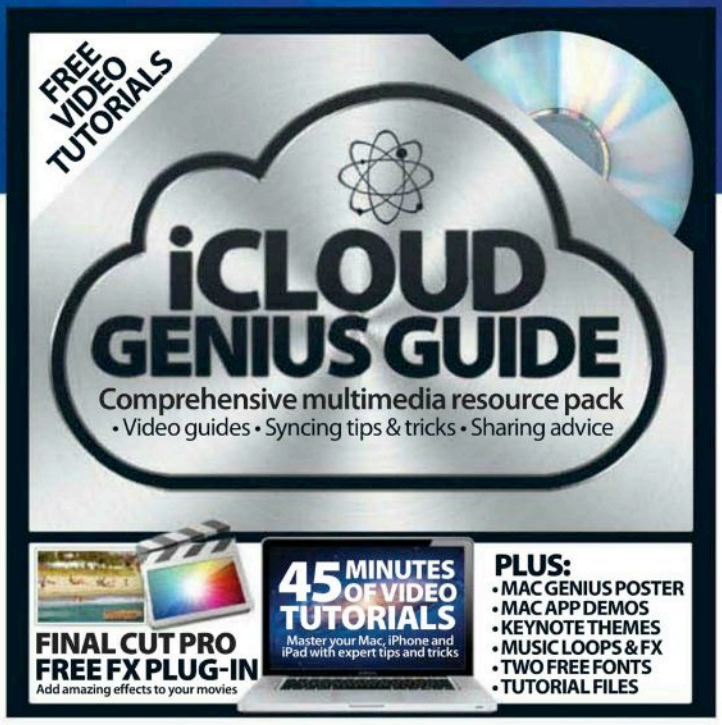
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BECOME A MAC GENIUS

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FREE DISC



iLIFE UPGRADED

16 20 Creative alternatives for your Mac, iPhone & iPad



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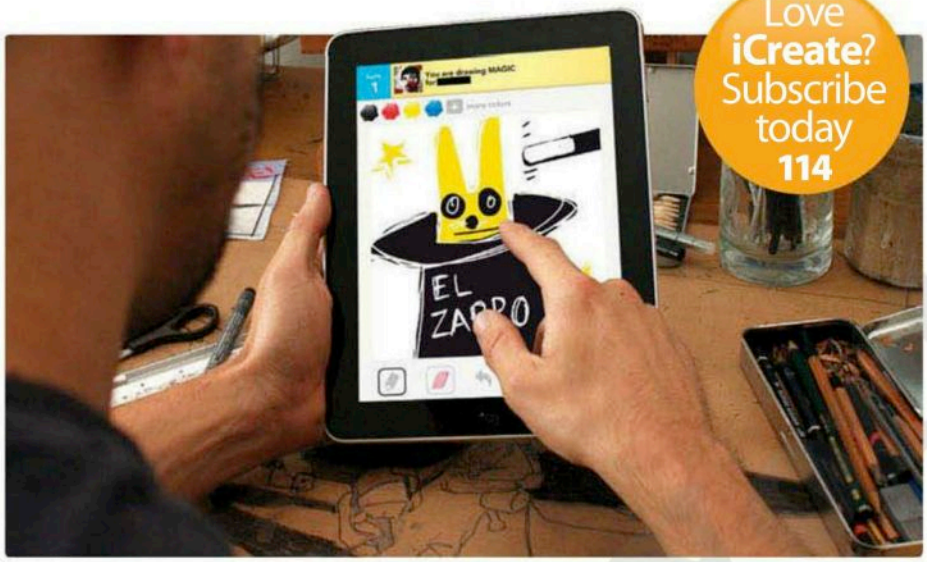
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Master the editing tools in iPhoto
Discover hidden info about your photos
Combing multiple effects in iPhoto
Access your original image after editing



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Create a stunning black and white scene
Cinematic movie transitions made easy



GarageBand 54
Enhance your music with automation
MIDI editing made easy
Use your Mac as a personal music tutor



OS X 80
App Store for beginners
iTunes tips and tricks
Control your Mac with Automator tasks
Tweak Finder's settings

Life beyond iLife...

There's a whole world of software out there



Aperture 60
Create and share amazing slideshows



Final Cut Pro X 64
Optimise your project for YouTube



We're excited 66
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Transform dark and flawed pics into perfect photos



Hazel 70
Quickly clean up your Mac's Desktop with Hazel



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Remove duplicate files using Gemini: The Duplicate Finder



WWDC2012

June 11–15 in San Francisco. It's the week we've all been waiting for

WWDC becomes pivotal in 2012

New releases seem inevitable as Apple seeks to maintain momentum

It's hard to think of a more hotly anticipated Worldwide Developers Conference than this year's. For Apple's developer community, the start of June is always an exciting time, but this year the eyes of the entire world are focused closely on San Francisco to see what Apple has up its sleeve. Tickets for the event sold out in just two hours, and at $1,600 per head it's clearly a hot ticket.

Traditionally, Apple has used WWDC as a platform to announce the new model of iPhone, which almost guaranteed that the keynote was considered a success. However, this year it is unlikely that we will see new iPhone hardware, and this could lead to a slump in Apple's momentum.

Last year, even when the new iPhone wasn't announced, Apple used the WWDC to promote its two new operating systems, OS X Lion and iOS 5. Steve Jobs was on hand to add his trademark passion to the event, but this year, without Steve, the onus will be on Tim Cook to deliver.

On top of the pressure to present a great keynote, the pressure on products is stronger than ever. Rival companies took some time to make products that could match Apple's own, but new tablets, smartphones and ultrabooks are finally starting to compete in the areas that Apple has dominated for several years. As a result Apple needs to pull something really impressive, and truly innovative, out of the hat if they want to stay on top of the growing competition.

This year's WWDC, then, will be the most important in the company's history. Apple are at the top of its game, and that means that people are waiting for it to fall. When Cook takes to the stage the world will be watching. We've learned never to doubt Apple, so our expectations are very high.



"Apple needs to pull something really impressive, and truly innovative, out of the hat"

Get in touch!

If you've enjoyed this issue of **iCreate**, or have any comments or ideas you'd like to see in a future edition, why not get involved and let us know what you think?

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Want to win at Draw Something? Turn to page 96

Five great WWDC moments



Since 1998, each WWDC has been kicked off with a keynote, usually presented by Steve Jobs, and they've often been used as a platform to introduce or launch new products and software. There have been some memorable moments over the years and we've picked out our five favourites.



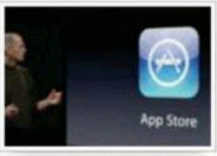
The OS 9 funeral

In 2002, Apple wanted to mark the end of OS 9 development and it did it in style. In a true flourish of showmanship, Steve Jobs enters a darkened stage swamped with dry ice and opens up a coffin where a boxed copy of OS 9 lies. Extravagant doesn't even come close!



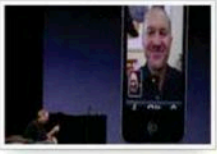
Say hello to iLife

2003's WWDC keynote saw the first reference of iMovie, iPhoto, iDVD and iTunes as the iLife suite of applications. Back then the software came as a boxed set and sold for $49 dollars. It also didn't include iWeb, which didn't appear as part of the collection until 2006.



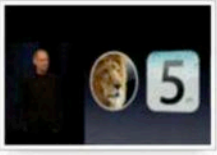
Steve Jobs introduces the App Store

When the original iPhone was launched, the App Store wasn't even an idea. Steve Jobs had originally envisioned iPhone apps being made available as web apps through Safari, but in 2008's keynote, he announced details of the iOS App Store, where apps could be sold, downloaded and wirelessly updated.



Turn off your Wi-Fi!

iPhone 4 announcement aside, 2010's WWDC keynote saw a frustrated Steve Jobs telling the audience of developers to stop using Moscone West's Wi-Fi so he could demonstrate a then stuttering FaceTime call with Jony Ive. It was a brief, and slightly awkward, departure from Jobs's usual slick presentations.



Lion, iOS 5 and iCloud – the triple threat

In what would be Steve Jobs's last WWDC keynote, 2011 saw the introduction of OS X Lion, iOS 5 and iCloud. In the introduction to iCloud, Steve Jobs made reference to the failures of MobileMe, which he famously told the team who made it that they, "should hate each other for having let each other down."

iOS 6: Do we really need it?



Last year, Apple used WWDC to announce iOS 5, which featured a huge number of improvements over the previous software. An updated notifications system, iCloud and Twitter integration, and the fantastic iMessage and Reminders apps made up an incredible jump in the iPhone and iPad's operating system.

In May, Apple released its latest update to the operating system, iOS 5.1.1, but many expect WWDC to give us a first look at iOS 6. The question is, do we really need it? Or more importantly, is there much wrong with iOS 5? This time last year we had been using iOS 4 for almost a year, but right now iOS 5 is just over six months old. We're not sure an overhaul is a necessity.

We would, of course, love to see new software at WWDC, and it's the perfect stage for the announcement. But with iOS 5 only on its fourth version, we're not fully convinced Scott Forstall will be taking to the stage for a major software announcement.

WWDC invites – through the years



2006 The 2006 invitation features a simple iCal icon reference.



2007's invitation drew on some of the elements of Time Machine's interface.



2008 2008's invitation was dominated by San Francisco's Golden Gate bridge.

2009 The 2009 invite featured an iPhone illustration and led to the unveiling of the iPhone 3GS.



2010 A truly iOS-focused WWDC was hinted at with an invitation featuring plenty of iOS app references.



2011 Last year's WWDC invite was perhaps the most descriptive and simply designed for years.



In the Dock

Find out which apps the team can't live without

Top 4 apps:

Automator (free)

Automator is a bit of an unsung hero and since we explored it and found out just how much it can do (see page 82) it's been a mainstay of our Dock – cleaning out our Downloads folder and Desktop automatically.

iMeme (free)

If you've ever fancied a go at creating your own internet memes, then iMeme is for you. We've been playing with it for a while and with updates coming thick and fast, it's bound to provide some comic relief.

Messages (free)

Apple's Messages beta, as the name suggests, isn't quite perfect, but there's no reason why you shouldn't download it and try it out. We're loving the integration between iOS and OS X thanks to this app.

Sparrow (£6.99/$9.99)

If you're a fan of Twitter's native OS X client and find Apple's Mail app a little cluttered, then we can't recommend Sparrow enough. With a clean UI and fully customisable interface, email has never looked more beautiful.



Samsung put pressure on the 4S

At the start of May, Samsung revealed its latest flagship smartphone, the Samsung Galaxy S III, which they will be hoping can destabalise strong iPhone 4S sales.

The S III features a 4.8-inch Super AMOLED screen with a resolution of 1,280x720 (compared to 960x640 on a 3.5-inch screen for the 4S), as well as a quad-core processor and eight-megapixel camera. The processor is definitely an improvement on that of the iPhone 4S, but with the iPhone's Retina display, camera with advanced optics and an eight-megapixel sensor, the two phones are still quite close in terms of stats.

Other features of the new phone include S-Voice, which sounds incredibly similar to Apple's Siri function that launched last year. It allows you to talk to your phone to make appointments in the calendar and write texts, which all sounds very familiar to us.

Previously, Apple used WWDC to announce the new iPhone, and this year the conference falls just a few days after the S III's European launch. While Apple is not expected to announce the next iPhone, it's likely to follow a few months later in October. The majority of rumours are focusing on a thinner, lighter design with a larger screen and more powerful processor. We're sure that Apple will come up with something truly incredible to beat off the challenge of Android powered competitors.



The S III will include an improved screen

"We're sure that Apple will come up with something truly incredible to beat off the challenge"

More iTV rumours



The rumour mill surrounding Apple's television set is still spinning, with new information this month suggesting that the iTV will resemble an Apple Cinema Display and include an iSight camera at the top.

These rumours aren't totally new, but there have been suggestions that this camera could lock onto your face and track you around the room, zooming in to keep you in the frame. This would mean you could continue a FaceTime call to a friend or family member without standing right in front of your TV.

It has also been mentioned once again that Siri will make an appearance, with the virtual assistant being used to initiate FaceTime calls. With all this new information, we can't wait to see what Apple announce later this year.

iCreate is now available on Mac!

At long last **iCreate** magazine is available as a download to Mac users through digital publishing platform Zinio. **iCreate** is currently available through iTunes and the Newsstand section, which gives you access to our digital editions on your iPad and iPhone, but you can now use Zinio to download and enjoy your favourite magazine on your Mac. The Zinio iOS app allows you to sync subscriptions across all of your Apple devices and there are some incredible subscription incentives available too, not only for **iCreate**, but for all Imagine Publishing titles. To find these amazing deals, head to our new digital subscription super-site (**www.greatdigitalmags.com**), where you can find links to all of our issues.



Discovered on iTunes

Find out what we've unearthed on Apple's massive media store

Books

A Dance With Dragons

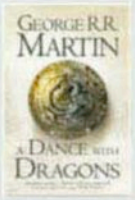
£11.99/$16.99

If you haven't already discovered the epic Songs of Ice and Fire series by George R. R. Martin, now is the most certainly the time.

Currently spanning five books (with several more due to be written) and being dramatised on American network HBO, the story takes place in a fantasy world of knights and dragons. Martin's story is told by following more than thirty different characters, each with their own importance in the over-arching narrative. With a medieval theme and brutal characters, the series has become an instant classic.

The whole series of books is available in a single download through the iTunes Store for around £30/$30, but as you can pick up the older titles for closer to £3, it's probably worth downloading them separately to get familiar.

The latest instalment sees even more plot twists as the gentry involved play their ever more dangerous Game of Thrones. You will be tempted to second guess Martin as to the outcome, but it's unlikely anyone could predict what his mind is able to conjure up. Brilliant.



TV and film



Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol

Sixteen years on from the original, is this the best one yet? £10.49/$14.99

The latest in the Mission Impossible series exploded onto cinema screens late last year with incredible, high-octane action scenes and slick dialogue. Tom Cruise returns in his role as Ethan Hunt, with support from Jeremy Renner, Paula Patton and the brilliant Simon Pegg.

The story line is as improbable as ever, with the team being implicated in the bombing of the Kremlin and going undercover to clear their names. What follows is a rip-roaring ride of next-gen gadgets, nail biting set-pieces and some of the best action scenes ever created. The action soars across the world, with scenes that involve Cruise climbing up the outside of the world's tallest building in Dubai and Renner hovering inches above a spinning fan to stop missiles firing on San Francisco.



The nicely balanced and often funny script is well delivered thanks to the talented cast. You will need to suspend your disbelief in some places, but the amazing stunt work that Cruise put into this film means that your heart will be in your mouth more than once. It's more than just a popcorn flick, and here in the **iCreate** office we think it's the best Mission Impossible film yet. Get downloading!

Apps

iPhone app of the month



Quarrel Deluxe £1.99/£2.99

This fantastic mix of strategy and word games makes for an addictive title. Like a combination of Risk and Scrabble, you'll need to direct your troops to take over, then go into battle with opponents by writing the best-scoring word possible. It's a lot of fun and there's a free version available.

iPad app of the month



Marvel Comics Free

Just in time for both The Avengers and the new Spider-Man movies, the Marvel Comics app gives you the chance to catch up on some of the back stories of the famous heroes. If you're new to comics the app offers suggestions of where to start, and there's plenty to keep you entertained.

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Check out the coolest Apple-related kit here...

Skinflips Skins

• www.skinflips.co.uk • £16.99/$24.99

When it comes to making your Mac look good, some might argue that it's difficult to improve on an already incredible design aesthetic. The brushed aluminium that Apple adopted a few years ago looks slick and modern, but if you want to look different from the MacBook-owning masses, you might want to try out a cool skin from Skinflips. They're easy to apply, well designed for a snug fit, and cover everything from the laptop lid to the keyboard base. They look great, too, and are available for the iPad, and several other devices.



Decals are provided for both the inside and outside of your device



The designs look fantastic, and are easy to apply without bubbles

Pebble Watch

• www.getpebble.com • £TBA/$TBA

While this has only just finished its Kickstarter funding period, it is by far the most successful project the website has ever seen. The company aimed for $100,000 but netted more than $10 million from excited fans. And with good reason: the elnk watch will connect wirelessly to your iPhone or other iOS device and display messages, tweets and other data on it. The creator has released a development kit so extra apps can be developed for the watch, and with an expected price of around the $150 mark, this should be affordable enough to become mainstream.



This is one of the most exciting ideas we've seen for years

"By far the most successful project the website has ever seen"

Veho Pebble Charger

• www.veho-uk.com • £39.99/$59.99

This charger gives you a huge number of charging options in one package; interchangeable connections allow you to charge your various devices easily. Three LED lights show you how much power the curved device has left, while a carry case makes transporting the various adapters easy. The power button is a little too easy to press, so it might be knocked on by accident, but with plenty of power stored in the black charger, it's a really useful device to own.



This box provides plenty of juice

The wooden design looks and sounds great



Vers 1E earphones

• www.versaudio.com • £41.00/$49.99

If you're looking for some new in-ear buds, but are just as worried about the environment as you are about the sound, this offering from Vers is bound to please. The American hardwood casing looks fantastic, and with Bamboo, Cherry and Walnut all available, there's plenty of choice.

Turn to page 118 for our review section

Swivl-it

• www.swicl.com • $129

We've been watching this one for a while, but the Swivl is finally on sale to the general public. Slot in your iPhone or camera and clip the receiver onto a piece of your clothing. The Swivl will follow your movement based on this receiver, rotating and swivelling to capture your every move. The receiver also contains a microphone for improved audio capture; the result is action shots that look incredible, and movies that never miss the important part. It's expensive, but with regular app updates this is essential for movie directors.



The Swivl platform makes recording action scenes a breeze



Quick Look

A glance at the coolest tech available for your Apple gear

Monolith for iPhone

• www.madebymonolith.com

• £45/$55

Feeling bored of the plain black glass on the back of your iPhone 4 or 4S? Why not replace it with a piece of wood? It might sound strange, but Monolith have come up with a solid wood backing for the iPhone that doesn't add any extra thickness, but looks and feels fantastic. It's easy to apply thanks to the tools that are included in the box, too. Stunning!



The company hope to offer custom lasering and more options soon

It might sound strange, but the soft leather smells fantastic



Joli Original Cases

• www.shop.jolioriginals.com • £29.95/$44.95

These stunning cases are beautifully hand-made in Holland to ensure the highest quality and best fit for your device. The mix of soft leather and wool felt cushion your MacBook Air, iPad or iPhone from knocks and bumps, and the range of colours makes sure you stand out from other leather cases. The cases are tested before they are shipped to make sure they hug the device they are designed for snugly; they feel stiff at first, but loosen up a little after a few days. The result is a case that is secure, but offers easy access to your device.

"The mix of soft leather and wool felt cushion your MacBook Air"



The range of colours available is brilliant



"This speaker caters for all your iOS devices, and at every angle you could want"

This futuristic design instantly stands out



Editor's Choice

AeroPad Two

• www.jarre.com • £570/$925

If you're after a speaker that mixes classic wooden design with space-age metallic curves, you'll love the AeroPad Two. Four speakers punch through the wooden front panel – they might look like flying saucers, but they pump out 30W RMS each, which is a lot of power. A sub-woofer with a strong kick that measures in at 80W RMS backs this up from the curved rear of the speaker.

What's more exciting is that this speaker caters for all your iOS devices, and at every angle you could want. Two 30-pin connectors sit on each side for a landscape iPad hook-up, with a third popping up at the bottom for your other iOS devices. The whole thing looks like it's going to have an incredible build quality, and while the price is high, we can't wait to see if the sound can match the premium you pay. We suspect that it will. The AeroPad Two is available for pre-order now from Jarre's website, for delivery in September 2012.

Group Test

On-ear headphones



Urbanears Plattan

£50/$59.99 – www.urbanears.com

For those that prefer their headphones to have a more rugged construction, the Plattans from Urbanears are the perfect choice. These are build to last. At 167 grams heavier than the V-Jays, the rugged construction comes at a cost. In practice, Urbanears don't feel overly heavy and they are well balanced so you are comfortable even for long periods. Sound wise they are the least impressive – comparatively the whole spectrum of sound seemed flatter and the bass was coloured a little too harshly. They are, however, very much suited to bass-heavy music and we must stress they do not sound bad at all. The Urbanears offer fantastic value for money and a unique fashion statement. They are well worth a purchase, but check out the others in the group test first.

★★★★●

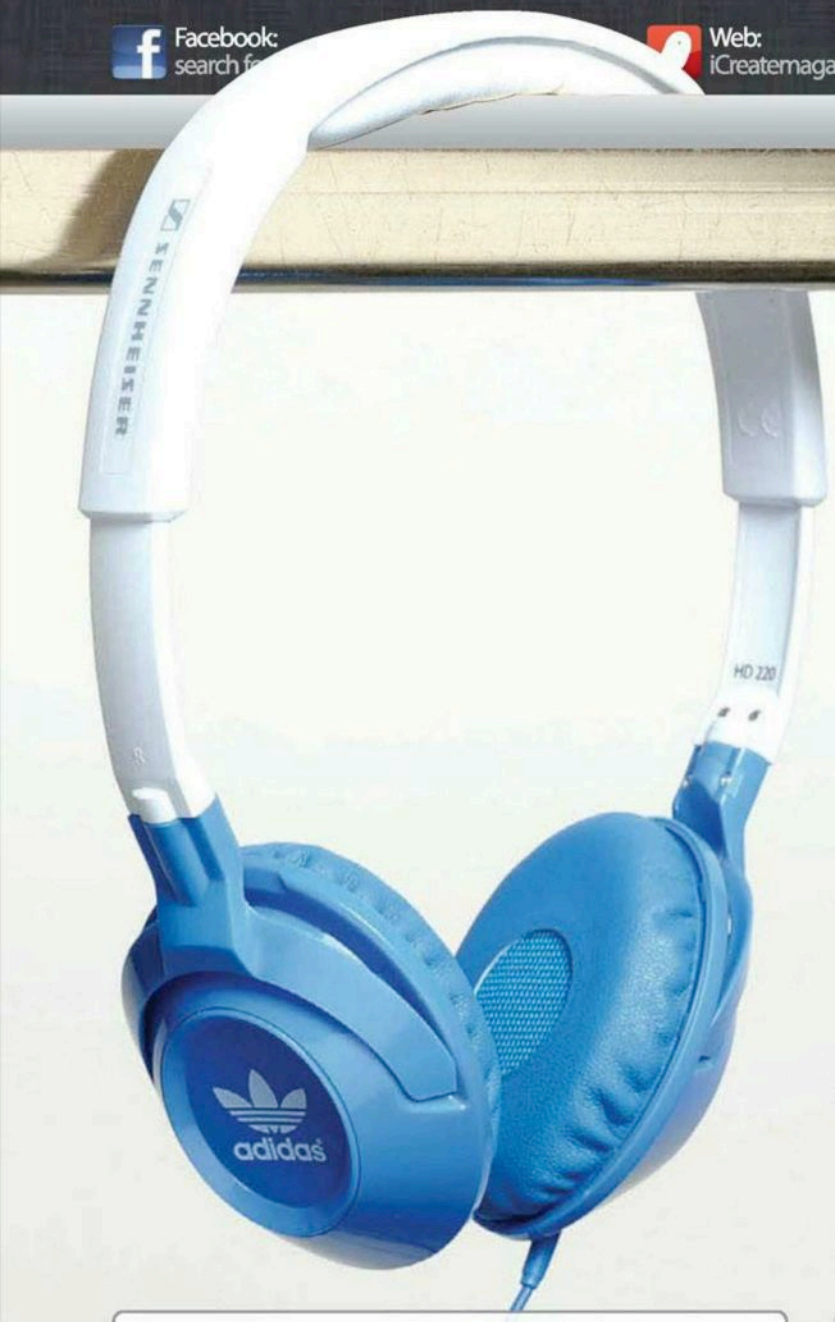
V-Jays

£39.99/$59.99 – www.jays.se

It's almost impossible to believe the pricing information on these headphones once you've heard what they can do. We were stunned. They deliver an astonishing, powerful and crisp range of sounds for a set of small headphones. These are actually the lightest cans in our test (just 59 grams compared to 90g for the Sennheisers and 226g for the Urbanears) but you won't believe it when you hear them. In terms of comfort they have a tight fit to help deliver that more powerful sound, but could cause slight discomfort after a long period. Extra details like the ergonomic folding, gold plated jack, carry case and incredible packaging add to the allure of these excellent headphones and really enhance the almost mind-blowing value for money you get when you buy a pair.

★★★★★

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"You won't find another set of headphones like these anywhere on the market"

And the winner is...

V-Jays

For pure power and clarity we have to award the V-Jays our sought-after winners' badge.

You won't find another set of headphones like these anywhere on the market. It's a real shame for the competitors, who could have won had they not been pitched against such a strong product.

The defining characteristic we love about the V-Jays is that they are so subtle compared to the other entrants in this test, and in comparison to much of the on-ear headphone market, which aims to bridge that gap between form and function.

The branded Sennheisers and the one-colour Urbanears deserve credit for their bold fashion statements, but they do lack the serious audio achievements that have somehow been crammed into the most unlikely of chassis. If you are of the over-ear persuasion and you want the best value for money possible while still getting serious bang for your buck sound wise, then these headphones should be at the top of your shopping list every single time.

The V-Jays are a worthy winner against stiff competition. A seriously great product!

Sennheiser HD220 Originals

£49.99/$69.99 – www.sennheiser.co.uk

While these Adidas badged Sennheiser on-ear headphones clearly represent the sports market, they have a certain style credibility too and could easily be a cool accessory for those that need to have a recognised brand adorning their ears.

Target market aside, these headphones are not only capable of delivering a crisp, uncluttered sound, they are extremely light and comfortable, making them the perfect companion for long listening sessions. Sound delivery isn't as loud as the other headphones in our test, but rest assured, if you want to crank the volume up on your device you can achieve the desired levels. If you like the style, want value for money and comfort then these are a good option. You'll get your money's worth!

★★★★●



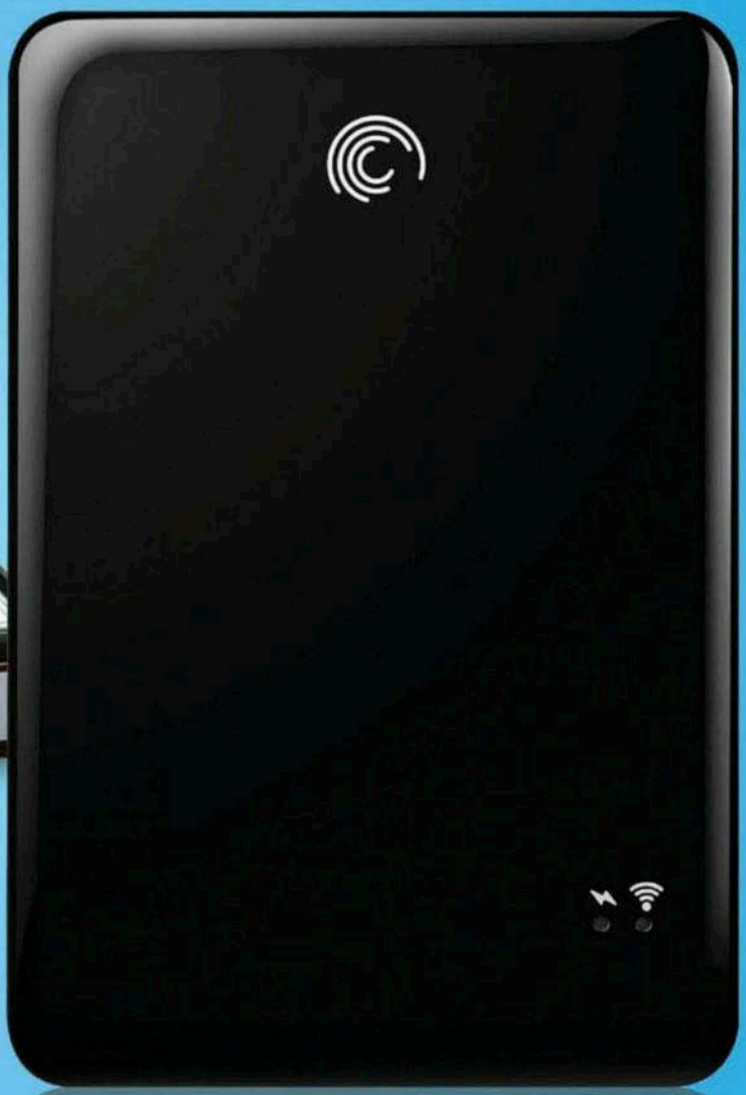
Win a GoFlex Satellite

If you haven't heard of the GoFlex Satellite, it's mobile wireless storage for your iPad. With 500GB of storage, the Satellite allows you to take your media library with you and stream it to your iPad without having to worry about running out of space. You can also stream and surf! Connect to the GoFlex Satellite device and access the internet at the same time. To be in with a chance of winning one of these prizes just answer this simple question and send to iCreate@imagine-publishing.co.uk

How many Gigabytes of storage are there in the GoFlex Satellite?

a) 100GB
b) 200GB
c) 500GB





RUNNERS UP

3x Seagate® GoFlex Cinema

The GoFlex CinemaTM multimedia drive allows you to store your media library in a central location, so that your films, photos and music can be enjoyed easily on your TV in full 1080p HD video and crystal clear surround sound.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

To submit your answer, simply email icreate@imagine-publishing.co.uk with the subject line 'Seagate Comp'. Please include your full name, age and address. The closing date for entries is 29 July2012. Please be aware that answers must be submitted to the above email address only. This competition is open to residents of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Imagine Publishing has the right to substitute the prize for a similar item of equal or higher value. Employees of Imagine Publishing (including freelancers), their relatives, or any agents are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be exchanged for cash. Full terms and conditions are available upon request. From time to time, Imagine Publishing or its agents may send you related material or special offers. If you do not want to receive this, please state it clearly on your competition entry.

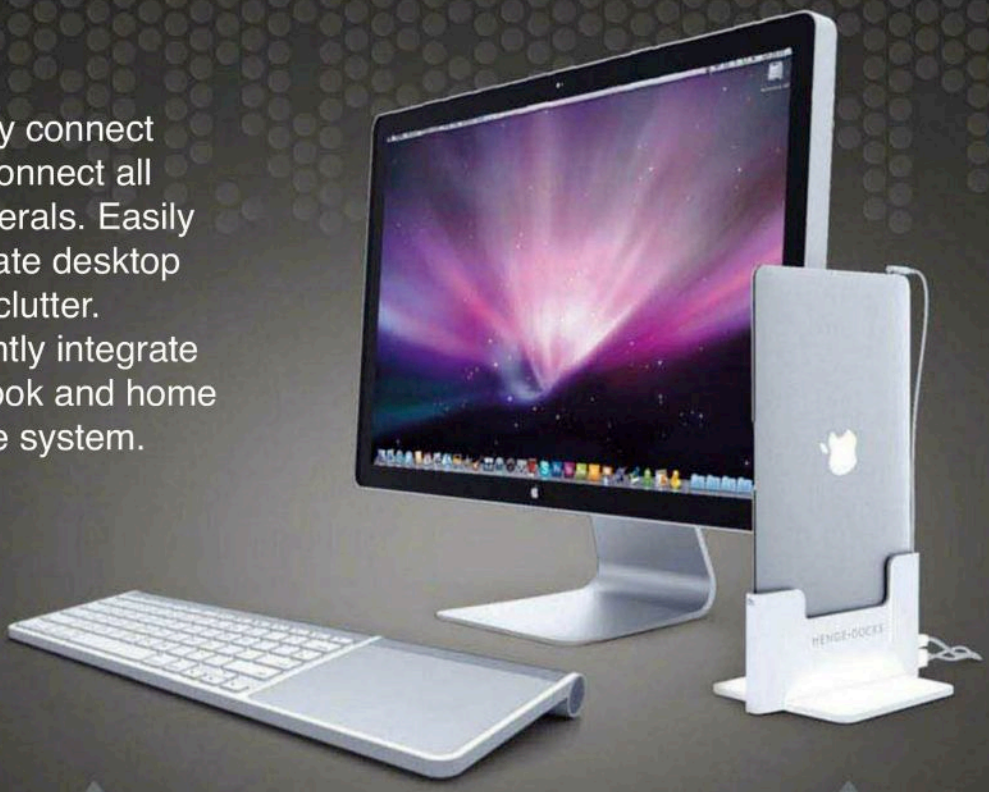
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iLife Upgraded

Upgrade your iLife suite with our pick of the best creative apps for your Mac

If you're looking to get creative on your Mac, iPhone or iPad – Apple's own iLife suite is a great starting point. The iPhoto, iMovie and GarageBand trio has been around for years and it has become a bedrock for creativity on the Mac since it was introduced. iLife for iOS might be late to the party, but that's catching up too, proving to be one of the least expensive ways to edit photos, make movies and create music on your iPhone or iPad. We love iLife, but there's always a feeling that it's not quite the whole package. Whether it's a missing feature, a software limitation or just a yearning for something new, we're always on the lookout for amazing alternatives to Apple's own creativity suite, and we've found a few apps we'd like to share with you too.

Over the next 12 pages, we'll look at iPhoto, iMovie and GarageBand – for both iOS and OS X – and present you with the best alternative apps that do a great job at taking them on and doing something better. Whether it's more loops and sounds for your musical creations, a quicker workflow for movie editing or a simpler way to fix a wonky photo these apps will help you to do it and do it better than their iLife equivalents. For the most part these apps are all around the same price as iPhoto, iMovie and GarageBand on their respective platform, so they're certainly affordable, and with most available on the Mac App Store, there's no reason why you can't grab them and get started as soon as you dive into this feature.

Looking for alternative apps that work even better than iLife is one pathway to greater creativity on your Mac or iOS device, but if you really want to make the best creative projects possible it's well worth playing to each app's strengths and using them in combination. For example, you may want to add some effects to your footage in Videator, import them into Adobe Premiere Elements and finally iMovie to finish it off.

We're pretty sure that we've found a few apps in this collection that you might not have heard before, but there's a good chance you've got a few of your own iLife alternatives in your app arsenal. Feel free to get in touch and tell us all about them, we'd love to hear what you use instead of iPhoto, iMovie and GarageBand and how you get creative on your Mac.

When you buy a Mac or iOS device you invest in quality, but when you spend time purchasing the best apps for the job, you're investing in creativity and ensuring that everything you make is as good as it can be. With that in mind, fire up your Mac, iPhone or iPad, grab some of the apps listed overleaf (a lot of the OS X ones have free trials, which is very useful!) and get imaginative with some of the best creative alternatives to iLife that we could find.



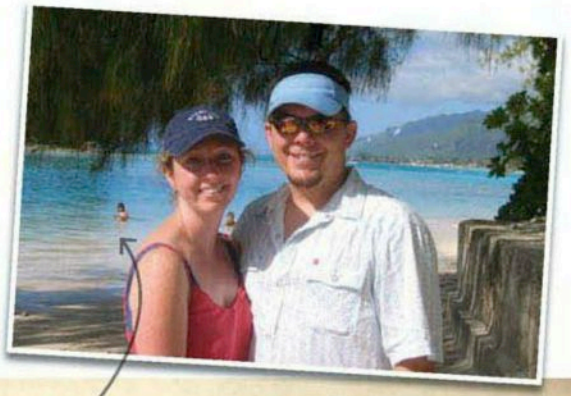
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Going beyond iPhoto

iPhoto may well be the jewel in iLife's crown – enabling you to easily organise and edit your photos from your camera, iPhone and iPad, but it's by no means the best piece of software out there. It's not to say that iPhoto isn't great as an all-round solution, rather that there are other apps out there that will give it a run for its money on a feature basis. When you break it down, iPhoto has three main features on offer: organisation, image fixing and effects – all of which can be bettered by a number of third-party apps. We've detailed some of these across the next couple of pages and explained exactly how they can do a better job than iPhoto. It's also worth knowing that, as far as image editing and effects are concerned, these apps can be integrated with iPhoto as external editors for an all-in-one resolution.



Our original image contains a few people in the background that we want to remove

In the red
Areas of the image you wish to remove are highlighted by Snapheal in red – these are slightly transparent, making it easy for you to work out exactly what's staying and what's going

Made a mistake?
If you've accidentally selected the wrong area of an image to remove, click on the deselect mode to paint over the mistake area and ensure it isn't accidentally removed. Make sure you return to select mode after



Size matters
When you're selecting areas of your image to be erased, make sure you choose a brush size that's appropriate in order to remove artefacts accurately and convincingly. Also, larger areas take much longer to remove

Eraser modes
Snapheal offers up three different eraser modes: Wormhole, Shapeshift and Twister. They have slightly different effects and uses depending on what you want to remove from your image

Fix flawed photos with Snapheal

As your photo library builds up, it's not uncommon to come across a few dud shots. While iPhoto's basic retouching, red-eye reduction, straightening and cropping tools might go some way to help you fix them, they're still fairly limited in terms of what they offer and what they can do. In other words, fixing a wonky horizon in iPhoto is easy, but what about the stray specks of dust that occasionally make their way onto your camera's lens? Or even the dreaded photographer's finger that finds its way into the side of what otherwise is a perfect shot? iPhoto can't fix these, but Snapheal (£10.49/$14.99, Mac App Store) can. Snapheal offers numerous functions, but does one particularly well – removing unwanted artefacts from images. It works far more effectively than iPhoto's own Retouch tool, which sometimes leaves a blurry or muddy area in place of anything it has removed. On top of that, Snapheal gives you a lot more control over the tools you use. It also offers Aperture-style adjustment brushes for a perfect finish to your edited images.



Snapheal makes light work of the challenge – the people are soon removed

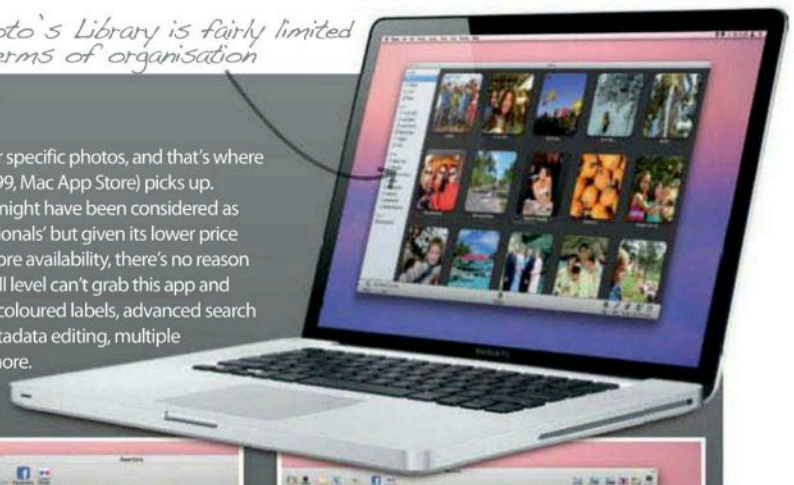


iPhoto's attempt at removing the assets results in a blurry artefact

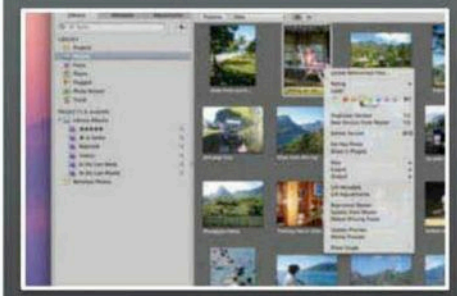
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iPhoto's Library is fairly limited in terms of organisation

Organise your images in Aperture

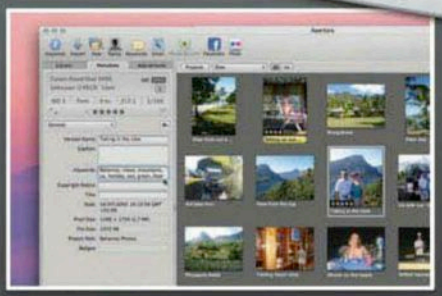


Over time, your iPhoto Library will undoubtedly become populated with more and more images, and this is where one of its greatest flaws starts to show – organisation. On the face of it, iPhoto's Library organisation is pretty good – allowing you to easily categorise photos by where they were taken, events they were taken at and even the people in them. But once you've accumulated hundreds, or even thousands, of images that you need to keep in order, it begins to fall short. One of the biggest issues in iPhoto's organisation system is searching for specific photos, and that's where Aperture (£54.99/$79.99, Mac App Store) picks up. Historically, Aperture might have been considered as the 'iPhoto for professionals' but given its lower price point and Mac App Store availability, there's no reason why anyone of any skill level can't grab this app and organise photos with coloured labels, advanced search functionality, easy metadata editing, multiple library merging and more. All of these features make life much easier!



Colour labelling

Flagging images in iPhoto is all well and good, but it's still fairly limited. Aperture's colour labelling is much more like the search system in Finder and enables you to categorise photos with seven different colours.



Metadata editing

Metadata is the key to finding images in your library, and iPhoto's metadata capabilities are pretty limited. Selecting any photo in Aperture and the Metadata tab in the Info pane lets you edit pretty much every detail.



Advanced searching

iPhoto's search function only allows you to look for images via one parameter such as name. Aperture, on the other hand, enables you to search using multiple options and even create photo albums based on those searches.

Add amazing effects with FX Photo Studio PRO

If there's one area where iPhoto falls short, more than anywhere else, it's with image effects. The eight options on offer are fine for quick changes, but they really aren't that flexible, or subtle. If you want to do a little more with your photos, you'd be hard pressed to do better than check out FX Photo Studio PRO (£27.99/$39.99, Mac App Store). With over a hundred effects and borders to add to your images, and full control over how each one looks, this Mac App Store offering is undoubtedly the best upgrade to iPhoto's own effects processing. Getting started with it is simple; drag an image onto the app to open it, preview effects and how they'll look along the bottom bar, click to apply them (there's plenty of slider settings) and save when you're done. The workflow really is that simple and the results can be stunning. You can also combine multiple effects with varying degrees of subtlety and save your own presets once you've found a group of effects you think work well together.



iPhoto's vintage-style effect is fairly limited

Effects are extremely varied for any occasion

FX Photo Studio PRO's vintage result is far more authentic



FX Photo Studio PRO has plenty of vintage-style effects to use

Better effects and creative projects than iPhoto for iOS

iPhoto is a bit of a latecomer to the image editing world when it comes to the iPad. Apple only released the app this year while other developers have had much longer to perfect their efforts. As a result there are an absolute wealth of apps out there that can boast not only slicker interfaces, but much more powerful features too. Here we are going to show you some of the coolest offerings on the App Store so you can take your image manipulation to the next level. The two main things people want to do with their images on the iPad is add effects and create cool projects, and in many cases they want to export from one app and then load projects into another. With these apps you can use them to truly put your pictures to good use.



Play with stunning effects in PhotoForge2

This great app (£1.99/$2.99) contains a bank of brilliant filters that you can use to transform your photography. Accessing your snaps is a breeze and adding effects is even easier. The interface looks really sumptuous and it's really simple to navigate. We highly recommend this app as it offers great value for money. The tools are so intuitive you can quite easily feel your way around the app's features.

PhotoToaster can bring out the best in any snap

PhotoToaster (£1.49/$1.99) is another great effect adding app. Not only does it have intuitive controls but it has a batch of amazing presets that you can apply to your snaps in a matter of seconds. The menu system is really slick and the whole app oozes quality, making for a great environment to be creative in. You can easily share your pictures from here and show off the amazing effects you've added in one of our creative project apps across the page. You can have hours of fun with PhotoToaster!

"From here… show off the amazing effects you've added"



Fine tune
Tune up your images by tapping on the buttons at the bottom of the interface and then playing with the sliders.



Amplify
This effect adds even more warmth and an almost painted brush effect to your landscape – check out the clouds!



Roadhouse
There are loads of effects to choose from like this roadhouse effect which looks like 1950s California!



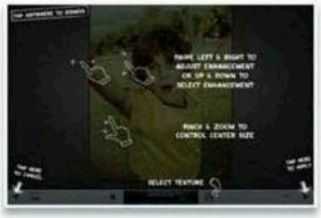
Happy
This effect is great for landscapes, especially beaches. It warms the colour while fading to give a cool retro look.



Just tap on effects in the bottom bar to see them applied

Restyle your pics with Snapseed

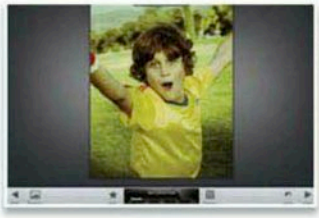
Snapseed (£2.99/$4.99) is a dedicated effects app that has 13 different sections of effects. Once you have loaded your photo you simply tap on one of these and you can add various elements relating to the effect you have chosen. The results are startling and the ease with which you can add effects is the biggest part of the allure. All you need to do is swipe your finger up or down to choose the variable within the effect, and then left or right to decrease or increase the strength of the effect.



Newcomers get some help
When you are new to the app this helpful overlay will appear when you load each type of effect. Don't worry, it won't keep on doing it, it's just for the newbies.



Up or down
Moving your finger up or down brings up this menu. As you can see there are a few cool options to play with and they all relate to the vintage theme.

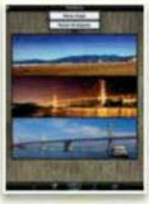


Left or right
Moving your finger left or right now dials in the effect. Move left for less effect and right for more. Combine different types from the menu for stunning new effects.

"You create much more authentic, stylish looking posters"

Create collages using Diptic

This isn't the only collage creating app on the App Store (£0.69/$0.99) but it's one of our favourites because it's so simple. If you want an app that you can use to create framed collages that look great printed out and hung on the wall, then this is it. It's stunning value.



Show off with Portfolio

This stunning app is the perfect way to showcase the photos you have accumulated. Section elements out, present in different ways and just enjoy being able to place and present your favourite pics.



Make a poster with Phoster

Phoster is a great little app (£1.49/$1.99) that lets you quickly create and share posters that feature your photos. You pick from a bunch of templates, add your picture, edit the text and away you go. There is an argument to say that the templates are a little rigid but we think that this keeps things simple and helps you create much more authentic, stylish looking posters.



1: Pick it
Load up Phoster, hit Create New and then surf through the templates; tap on one you like.



2: Get it right
Picking the right picture is tough so always try to have a theme that you want to use for your poster.



3: You know you're right
You'll know when you have the right picture – the poster will look perfect immediately.



4: Get tapping
Tap on each text field and you can enter text as well as play with the font, size, colour and more.



5: Pick your paper
When done, hit the next button to choose paper type. These add great extra detail to your poster.

Improve on iMovie

Out of all the iLife apps on offer, iMovie is perhaps the hardest to work with. It's still a great app, especially when it comes to organising movie clips gleamed from your iPhone, iPad and digital camera, but it does have its limitations. Unlike iPhoto, iMovie has a pretty steep learning curve if you want to create a great movie and that's enough to put some users off completely. Once you've got to grips with the app though, it's perfectly good for creating some movies but it does feel a little limited in terms of the number of effects on offer and the export formats you can finish off with. With that in mind, we've found three apps that take iMovie on at its own game and beat it on the points above. They all have their own strengths and weaknesses, so using a combination of these will make for amazing home movies.



Premiere Elements is all about speed

"Videator offers a plethora of interesting effects"

Add amazing movie effects with Videator



One area where iMovie completely falls down is in its ability to add live effects to your movies. You might well be able to open the inspector window and adjust settings like brightness, exposure and saturation to change the look and feel of your footage, but other than that, your options are pretty limited. There are plenty of apps that do offer this sort of functionality, but if you really want to get the best results, you're better looking at a dedicated video effects app like Videator (£34.99/$49.99, Mac App Store). It might not be the most elegant app we've seen, but Videator offers a plethora of interesting effects that can easily be applied to your video clips. There's plenty to choose from, and all of them can be controlled via their own dedicated sliders. For the best effects, you'll want to work with one clip at a time and slowly layer up effects to give you the look and feel you're after. Once you've done so, you'll need to export your clip to an editor like iMovie to finish off your film.

iMovie's effects options are fairly limited in terms of what can be done



Make movies with Premiere Elements



Adobe's Premiere Elements might be similar to iMovie, but it has got a few features that beat Apple's offering hands down when it comes to creating amazing movies fast. The clips window is up in the top-left for easy access to all of your imported footage, to the right is a preview window for playing your movie in progress and along the bottom is the timeline where you can order your footage and add effects. This alone wouldn't make Premiere Elements better than iLife, but where the app really comes into its own is through its range of Smart and Instant tools that allow you to select clips, choose a movie theme and have the app analyse and cut them together using its own algorithms to create a movie in minutes. What's more you can easily edit Premiere Elements's own creations if the app hasn't got things quite how you like them.



Auto corrections

If you're not happy with your footage, Premiere Elements's range of auto-adjustment features can help. Just select the clip to be corrected, head into the Edit tab then find the auto-adjustment you want to use.



InstantMovie

If you need to make your movie fast, there's no better way than to do it with InstantMovie. Simply select the clips you want, hit the InstantMovie button, select a theme for your movie and let the app do the rest.



Options

Don't let the fact that InstantMovie is fast fool you, you still have access to a range of important options to create the perfect film. You can choose everything from the pace of editing to the mix of in-film sound.



Easy-to-create titles

Premiere Elements also includes a huge number of text titles to complement your footage. These are easily applied and animated using the preview window and the menu to the right of the interface.

Choose your medium

Vivideo contains different menus for exporting your movie to your Mac, device, YouTube or DVD. Choose these from the tabs at the top of the menu for a set of media-specific options

Click Create

When you're happy with the settings you've chosen and the file format your exporting to is set, click Create to let Vivideo do the hard work of exporting your video ready for playback

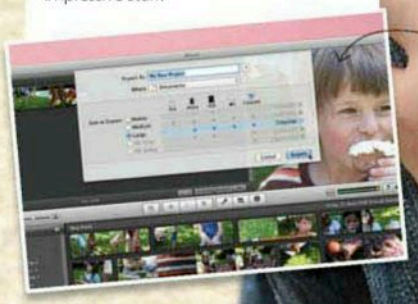
Find a format

The Format drop-down menu provides options for every format that Vivideo exports to. This changes slightly for different media. A description of each format is provided to help you make the best decision

Export your films to more places



When you're exporting video from iMovie, there's no denying that you're a little limited to one or two file types and formatting for iOS devices only. While this might be okay for the majority of people who keep their films on their Macs, iPhones or iPads, it might not cut the mustard for those who want to ensure that friends, family or the wider world can view their creations regardless of the device they're watching on. If you fall under the latter category, you could look for a conversion program to convert your iMovie exports. In this case, it's Vivideo ($39.99, **wondershare.com**) – a fully-featured iMovie alternative that provides more file formatting options for your finished films. We've yet to find a more flexible iMovie alternative when it comes to finalising your movies for different devices. All of these formats and more can be found under Vivideo's Share menu. It's impressive stuff!



iMovie's export options might be simple, but they're not so comprehensive

Want to customise?

Hitting the Settings button next to the Format drop-down menu allows you to customise the export settings for each file format you use, including detailed image and sound options. It even shows an estimated export size

"A fully-featured iMovie alternative that provides more file formatting options"

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Advanced movie editing

When the iPad was first announced it seemed unlikely that anything as sophisticated as iMovie could ever really work on it, not least because of the lack of a camera. But, as is now customary for Apple, it turned public perception on its head and did just that, bringing a full-blown movie editing suite to its tablet. Unlike the other apps in the suite there aren't thousands of great video editors that can replace iLife but there are one or two. It's these that we will be focusing in on so you can improve the quality of the videos you make on your iPad.

Get musical
You can also add music to your projects. Avid has access to your iPod so you can pull in any tracks you have already loaded on your iPad

Trash it
If you want to delete a clip you have added to your timeline you can use the trash icon to delete. The clip will remain stored on your iPad, though

Add slick extras using Avid Studio

This is one of the most comprehensive movie editing apps on the iPad. Not only does it have an easy-to-use interface, but the transitions and titles are easy to add and diverse enough to offer a refreshing change over what you've been used to with iMovie. There are some similarities to iMovie, which helps when learning how to navigate the app. The layout of the editing window is very similar and as a result you can feel your way around much of it and discover some of the pretty cool features. We've put together a quick step-by-step guide to get you started as well as a gallery showing you some of the cool features that will take you beyond Apple's entry-level movie editing app.

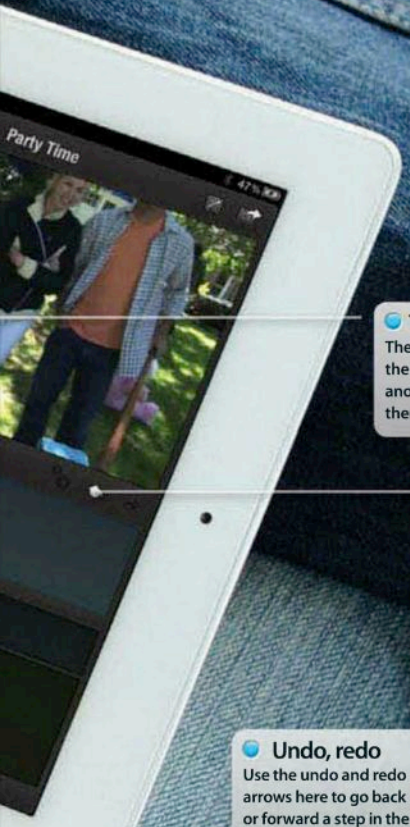


Transitions
There are 16 available transitions. Different transitions are easily distinguishable from one another.



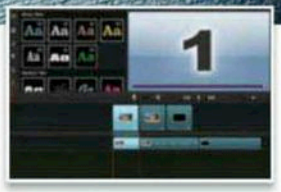
Montage
These animations are a cool way to start and end your projects and add a professional touch.

"Its interface is so inviting that creating stop motion movies is exceptional fun"

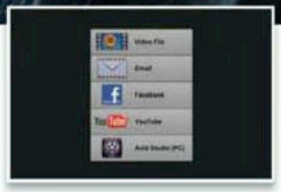


Transition
These are transitions and they make the movement from one clip to another look more professional. Place them between clips, photos and titles

Undo, redo
Use the undo and redo arrows here to go back or forward a step in the editing process. A handy trick should you mess up



Titles
These are a huge part of any video design workflow. Simply, drag them onto your timeline and edit the text.



Sharing
The sharing options are really straightforward and you can even export your movie at 720p.

Create a stop motion movie with Smoovie

Given the sheer range of software available for the iPad it should really come as no surprise that you can use it to create stop motion movies. You would, however, be forgiven for thinking that doing so would be pretty difficult, fiddly and all together unnatural. Luckily this really isn't the case. Smoovie is not only instantly useable, but its interface is so inviting that creating stop motion movies is exceptional fun. The software is so accessible in fact that you can create fun scenes in a matter of minutes or carefully craft a whole movie. Add to this some slick sharing options, a couple of frame rate options and the instant playback element and you have an app that is worth way more than ten times what the developer is asking for it. In this tutorial we'll show you how to create your first stop motion movie and share it online.

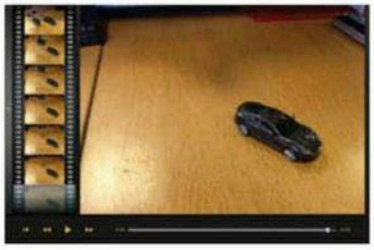
Step-by-step | Smoovie Create a stop motion movie



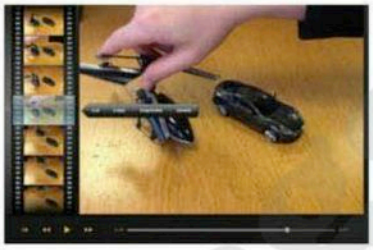
1: Get snapping
In this screen you must frame your shots and then use the camera button to snap each frame, moving the objects bit-by-bit as the scene unfolds.



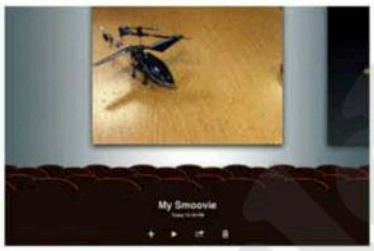
2: Check the info
Armed with a frame rate and a batch of pictures, this section will tell you how long the number of frames you have will be when you play it as a video.



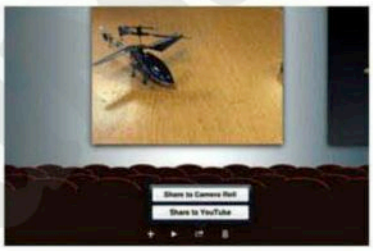
3: Edit mode
Tap the tiny triangle that divides the two windows and a new section will appear showing each frame. These can be selected and moved if needed.



4: Get rid of the rubbish
It's highly likely that there are frames in your video that aren't quite up to scratch (ie have hands in them) and you can tap on a frame to delete them.



5: Go back to view
Your creation is saved in the original opening screen, you can keep a collection there. Click on your movie and it will spring into full screen mode.



6: Share it
In the main project screen tap the share button to either save the movie to your own Camera Roll or share it to YouTube.

"Tap the share button to… save the movie to your own Camera Roll"

Make even better music

Of all the iLife for OS X apps we've covered in this feature, GarageBand has been the hardest to beat. It's a stellar app and it offers a lot for the price (it's even better value if it comes as part of your Mac purchase!). That said, there's a few alternatives out there that are worth noting. They might not necessarily be great all-rounders, but they do take on some of GarageBand's features and succeed in doing them a lot better. Providing you're saving your audio files in an easily transferable format such as WAV or AIFF then you'll have no problems switching between each app and playing to each of their strengths to create some amazing tracks. What's more, every app we've featured here has a free OS X trial so you can try before you buy and discover if they're right for you. With that in mind, grab the apps and we'll get to work on creating some amazing music.

> "Every app we've featured here has a free OS X trial so you can try before you buy"

Check those waves!
Wave forms are a lot more detailed in Audition compared to GarageBand, making editing and automation a lot easier to perform on specific sections of your song

Take control with Adobe Audition

At $349, Adobe Audition may well be considered pro software, but that doesn't mean it's not worth considering if you're looking for something that gives you a lot more control over individual tracks compared to GarageBand. Unlike Apple's iLife offering, Audition gives you far more control over plug-in parameters and plenty more spaces to add and layer effects. The result is that it's much easier to sculpt sounds and get tracks sounding exactly how you want them. On top of this, Audition touts a completely extra feature when compared to GarageBand – the track mixer. Designed to look like a real-life mixing desk, complete with faders and visual Db levels, Audition's mixer makes it far easier to perfect your multi-track recordings and ensure that every sound sits at the right level compared to the slightly fiddly volume sliders in GarageBand's multi-track view. It might not be a feature that's unique to the app, and it might even seem a little intimidating at first, but Audition's mixer is relatively easy to use. If you need more control over your tracks, Audition is one of the best options out there.



At some point GarageBand will become too limited

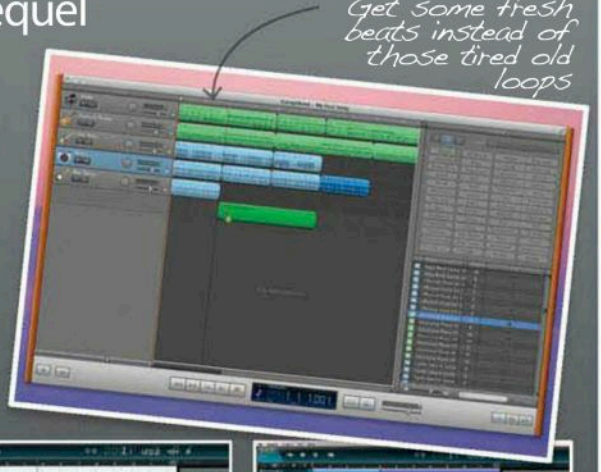
The effects rack
Each track in Audition has its own effects rack where effects you've applied are stored. Add new effects by clicking on any blank slot and turn them on/off by clicking the power button next to each one

Look familiar?
Despite a slightly darker UI, Audition's multi-track recording view isn't all that different to GarageBand's offering. All of the elements you need are in roughly the same places

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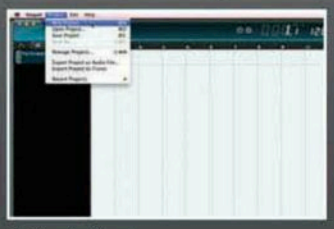
Create tracks with loops in Steinberg's Sequel

One of GarageBand's greatest features is its loops-based music creation – you don't need to be a pro musician to get to grips with loops. Putting together the right ones gives you more than enough audible ammo to create songs in seconds. That said, if you've used GarageBand for a while you may feel the loops are a little stale. You could sort this by importing more loops, or you could take a look around at some of the other apps on offer. If you're opting for the latter, look no further than Steinberg's Sequel (£67.20, **steinberg.net**). It's a great, loops-based editing app that's incredibly easy to use and full of amazing sounds.



"It's a great, loops-based editing app that's incredibly easy to use"

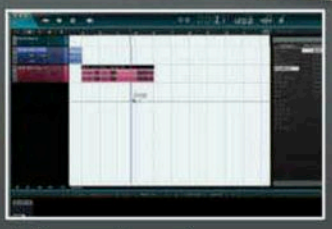
Step-by-step | Get started with Sequel



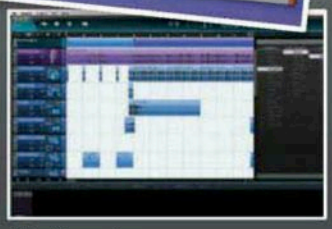
1: Start afresh
Head to Project>New Project or by using the keyboard shortcut Command+N. The Project menu is also where you'll export tracks from once you've finished.



2: Right on track
Double-click in the left-most sidebar to create a new track and select a track type from the Add Track menu. Or drag loops into a free space in the multi-track view.



3: Rinse and repeat
Keep adding new loops to existing tracks or create new tracks to layer sounds and create your song. It's a simple process and a lot of loops already have their own effects.



4: In the mix
As you work through each track in the multi-track view, you can adjust their individual volumes using the fader in the mixing window at the bottom of the interface.

Record podcasts fast with Ubercaster

Our final GarageBand contender comes in the form of the appropriately named Ubercaster (Free, **pleasantsofware.com**). Ubercaster, as you may have guessed, does one thing only – it makes podcasts unbelievably easy to record. The app might not look particularly OS X-like, but it's made for Mac and everything is designed to make recording, triggering audio clips and reading show notes as easy as possible. Unlike GarageBand, which relies on you adding in audio clips after you've finished recording, Ubercaster allows you to play audio mid-way through your show and have it all added to a multi-track editing window after you've finished. It even integrates with apps like Skype and iChat, allowing you to take calls throughout the duration of recording without having to hit stop. Once you've finished recording and editing, Ubercaster can even upload your podcast online ready to be picked up by iTunes and shared with the world – it's a truly all-encompassing app. It might not be suitable for making music, but for podcasters who find GarageBand a bit fiddly, it's perfect.

Check your levels
A levels meter in the top-left makes it easy to check whether you're speaking too loud or too quiet throughout your show, saving you having to do loads of editing later on

Making notes
Ubercaster's show notes integration allows you to keep up to speed with what's coming up next in your podcast without the annoying rustling of loose sheets of paper interrupting your show





The interface is radically different to GarageBand's

Prepare, Record, Cut, Release
Ubercaster has four main views: Prepare, Record, Cut, Release, each representing the four stages of creating your podcast. The final view, Release, lets you upload your finished podcast to a server and unleash it on the world

Tap out a new rhythm

GarageBand for iPad is an astonishingly good app. There's no dying that, but while it attempts to be a jack of all trades it lacks some of the focus that makes specifically targeted music apps much more successful. Here we have three apps that we think music makers will love. They offer very different approaches to similar areas in GarageBand but have some of the most cutting-edge technology tucked inside them…

"They offer very different approaches… but some of the most cutting-edge technology"





Loads of samples

There are tons of great beats to pick from. Each has its own signature and can be edited into something completely different.

Create funky beats with Korg iELECTRIBE Gorillaz Edition

Korg has a great reputation in the world of professional audio, and using its iELECRTIBE software engine it has teamed up with virtual band Gorillaz to create this excellent music-making app. It allows you to build your own sets of beats and customise them using elements created by Gorillaz. The interface isn't as intuitive as GarageBand's offering, but there is definitely a far more current feel and the beats certainly feel modern. Once you've mastered how to make changes to the way each section is played and you've put your own stamp on each element, you can export them out and even share with SoundCloud from within the app. As a music-making app this is a little limited in terms of the range of things you can do, but if you just want to have fun playing around with great sounding music then it is a perfect app.



Top menu

Tap at the top of the app to reveal a secret menu where you can begin sharing your work or gain access to the settings.



Sculpt amazing new sounds with Animoog

If it's pure sound creation that you want from a musical app then the incredible Animoog is the one for you. With a stunning array of customisable sounds, users can literally feel their way through a soundscape and create unimaginable musical parts. A keyboard sits at the bottom of the interface enabling users to play notes from scales or the classic black and white notes. There's also a batch of controls on the right that can alter elements of the sound, while a touch surface allows each note to be manipulated and evolved through the X and Y axis. The result is the ability to not only develop a unique sound each and every time you play, but the ability to record and export sounds as you make them. Any serious synth-heads out there will find this app a joy to use and the casual music maker can use it to extend the vocabulary of the sounds they use. A really super app that shows just how versatile the iPad is.

Finger fun

Drag your finger across the touch pad to change the sound that is being generated. Speed up and slow down to add to the dynamic

Bells and whistles

Use the controls to alter elements of each sound. Drag your finger up or down on each to move them to different settings

Play the keys

They might not look like it but these are the keys you tap to play the notes, but they represent only a tiny portion of the sound you create



Mimic great guitarists with AmpliTube



One of the biggest revelations in GarageBand was the breadth and depth of the amp modelling for guitar players. With the right cable they can connect directly to the iPad and use it as a virtual amp. This technology isn't exclusive to Apple, however, and IK Multimedia has its own guitar amp app called AmpliTube. It's based on the very successful plug-in for Logic and GarageBand and combines some of the best amp modelling technology, with guitar effects and a recording studio to offer a comprehensive iPad solution. There is also the option to buy a ton of extra features in the form of new amps and effects, so you can get a really broad number of sounds. The modelling of each sound is truly staggering with faithful representations of Fender, Marshall and Vox amps among others. The recording system is also very cool – it lets you add multiple layers and you can even master your recordings so they are pristine before exporting. While AmpliTube offers the casual guitarist the opportunity to play with cool amps and effects it also lets those who want something more professional get their teeth into a whole production suite geared specifically at the guitar. It's a top app.

"You can even master your recordings so they are pristine before exporting"

Great design
AmpliTube is cleverly designed to give you access to all of the elements you are likely to want to play with as you play your guitar

Love your levels
You can tweak every level of every effect by dragging your finger up and down across each effect's level switch. Tap each effect on and off at the bottom of the pedal

Amazing menu
From this bottom menu you can access all kinds of goodies like a tuner, metronome, your iPad's music collection and even the recording suite



Clean amp
Based on the Fender Blackface Deluxe. It delivers great chiming, jangly sounds.



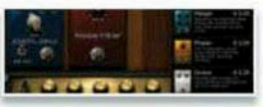
Lead amp
Wail out the super-solos with this Marshall JCM800-based model. It sounds just as lush as the real deal.



Crunch amp
Based on the VOX AC30, this classic crunchy sounding amp can be used for both lead and rhythm parts.



Recording
Beautifully themed to look like a retro tape-to-tape reel, it boasts some impressive features.



Shop
You can buy all kinds of extras from the shop, so make sure you have in-app purchases turned on.

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Make an amazing photo collage card

Create and print a beautiful card featuring a collage of your favourite images



Greetings cards are a fantastic way to share things with your friends and family. From a happy birthday greeting to a few photos from your latest trip abroad, iPhoto now gives you the tools on your Mac to make your own. Of course we all know the fantastic feeling of browsing through rack after rack of cards at the local shop, only to find that none of them are really that great. Recently a lot of companies have started popping up that offer you the ability to add your own photo and message to a card before posting it straight to someone's door. This is a great way to share a photo, but the designs on those websites might be just as poor as the efforts in your local corner shop.

Instead, why not try creating your card from scratch using one of the templates provided by Apple in iPhoto? The app already holds all of your fantastic snaps, along with the edited versions that you've created, and the card-making interface is just as simple and well designed as you would expect from the seminal tech company. These are all available to buy directly through iPhoto, but that isn't the only way for you to print your cards and send them to friends; you can also export the finished cards as a PDF document and then print them yourself in Pages. In this feature we'll take you through the design process of making your first fantastic card, as well as giving you a few tips on how to put together the cards yourself for an incredibly professional-looking finished article.

> "You can also export the finished cards as a PDF document and then print them yourself in Pages"

The choice of designs is fantastic, too, with cards for big holidays like Christmas and Easter, as well as a range of birthday designs and some that will work all year round. The app also offers postcard designs that can be sent with simple messages or standard postcard designs that allow you to also include an address and stamp on the reverse. Some of the best designs available to create and buy through iPhoto are those that use several photos to build up a collage. These enable you to share a wide range of photos on a single card, and changes like background colour and the layout of the collage can be customised to fit your photos.



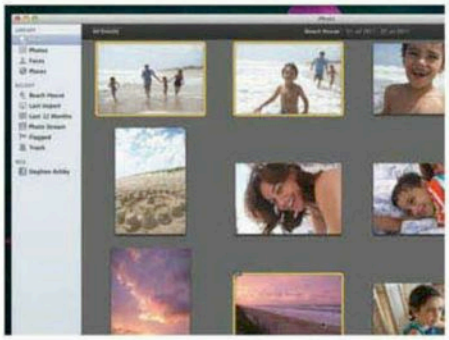
Spotlight When you print your card, remember to check that the front and back line up properly, so that when you cut the card you don't get any nasty white lines.



iPhoto
Featured tutorial

Pro advice | iPhoto Design your collage card

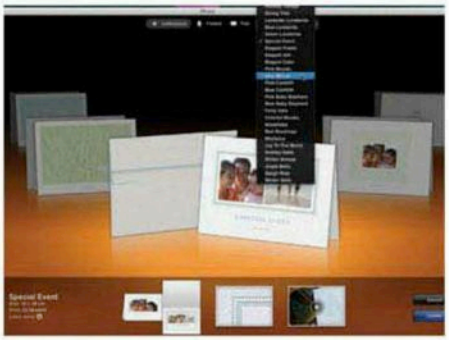
There are plenty of cards to choose from in iPhoto, and the collage cards look fantastic, but there are some design aspects that you need to consider when putting your final print together...



1: Choose images
First, choose the images you want to include by Cmd+clicking. Diversity is important, and you can add photos later based on Apple's suggestions.



2: Get creative
In the bottom-right click the Create button and choose Card from the menu. This menu will also tell you how many photos you have selected for the project.



3: Letterpress
The Letterpress selection of cards offer embossed cards printed on beautiful paper. There are a limited number of collage options here, such as Mosaic.



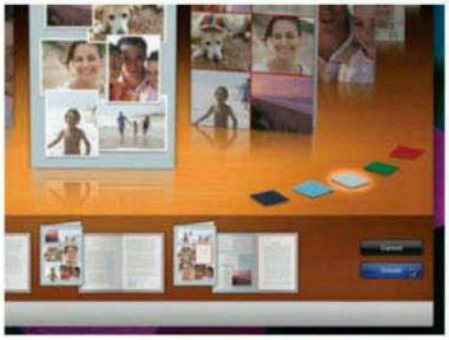
4: Previews
Underneath the scrollable wheel of cards you will get to see a small preview of what your finished card could look like, both inside and out, which is really useful.



5: Folded
For a wider selection of collage cards, click the Folded option at the top of the window. This is a perfect choice for home printing as well.



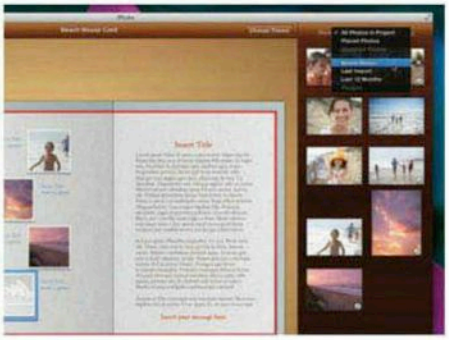
6: Angles
There are controls on the left and right of the card menu that allow you to change the orientation of the cards as well as the background colour.



7: Create
Choose colours that complement the images you've included, and when you're happy with the previews at the bottom, click the Create button.



8: Layout options
You will now see a full-sized version of your card. The first thing you do is alter the layout to your preferred setting. Do this before you alter the photo locations.



9: Extra snaps
There might be a few empty spots, and if so, click Photo in the bottom-right. Choose the album that you used to create this card from the drop-down menu.

Spotlight Pick photos that will go well together, and make sure you have a mix of faces and landscapes to get a brilliant balance for your collage card.

Knowledge base

Worth it?

Depending on the type of card you choose, you could be paying a very small amount for the cards themselves. Most of the cost comes in the form of delivery charges. When you're designing your card, you could choose to make something more generic and order several copies instead of one, to save yourself some money.



Text editing

When you click on a text area, this small pop-up box will appear with some basic controls. For more text editing abilities, click Options down in the bottom-right corner when a text box is selected

Layout options

Basic layout options appear when you click a photo or the card's background, but to make more detailed changes you can use the Layout button in the bottom-right to show a drawer with more options

Navigator

If you need to get a closer look at any part of your card you can zoom in. The slider in the bottom-left lets you do this; you can then use the Navigator to get around

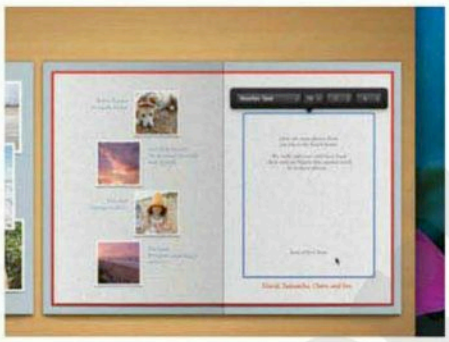
Extra shots

To add extra shots to your card, or simply replace photos that don't work too well, click Photos in the bottom-right and choose your album at the top of the drawer that appears



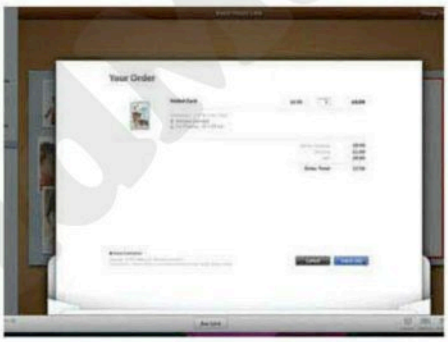
10: Drag to add

When you find a photo you like, drag it into the empty square. You can swap photos within the card around in the same way, and edit them with a single click.



11: Add some text

No card is complete without some words, so click in the boxes to write your message. For more editing tools, such as character and line spacing, click Options.



12: Order or print

Once you're finished you can order prints of your card through iPhoto, or export the card to print yourself. There are more instructions for this on the next page.



iPhoto's collage cards

We take a look at some of our favourite designs

Picture Card

If you just want to focus on your photos, Picture Card is a fantastic choice; the edge-to-edge designs are available in different sizes to offer more focus on a single image



Snapshots

This card allows you to place a title on the front if you wish, or simply let your photos do the talking. You can add shots to the inside as well, and annotate them to give a really personal feel



Colour Wash

It might only show three images on the front of the card, but there's a space for another inside, with a short message that's perfect for a teacher's thank you card on the last day of term



Colour options

Each card has different colours that you can choose from. Take some time to match the colour you choose to the type of photos you have chosen for your card

Mosaic

This simple two, three or six-photo design comes in a range of pastel colours, making it perfect for shots of a new baby or young child's birthday



Portrait or landscape?

If you find a design you like, try it in both portrait and landscape orientations – each one offers different designs

Paper Tree

This looks like a normal card on the outside, but the inside is distinctly Christmas themed; this collage is perfect for sending to aunties and uncles at the festive time of year



"If you find a design you like, try it in both portrait and landscape orientations"

Top 5 tips for printing your cards

Our advice is ideal for printing at home

Letterpress card

If you want to perfectly recreate a card in the Letterpress form, the only way to do it is with a large machine. For this kind it might be better for you to simply order the card from Apple, as the required hardware isn't really available to average consumers.





Paper

Choose your paper carefully; photo paper can work, but will be stickier than a normal greetings card. Paper and card specifically designed for making your own greetings card is available from craft shops.

Know your printer

Before you buy your paper or even think about clicking Print, learn what your printer can handle. Look at the manufacturer description and read the manual cover-to-cover to make sure that it will be able to print on thicker card, and learn the settings to do this before you start.



Practice run

In your head, assume that the first print out of each card is going to go wrong and think of it as a practice run. If it all goes perfectly you can obviously use it as a final print, but don't worry if there's a problem as it helps make the second run flawless.

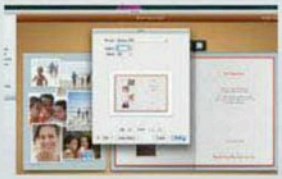


"Read the manual cover-to-cover to make sure that it will be able to print on thicker card"

One at a time

Remember that when you print cards as a PDF you will need to print on both sides of the same piece of paper or card. Work out how you need to put the paper back into the printer so everything aligns as it should.

Printing tips



Print?

It might seem strange, but to save your card as a PDF you need to choose File>Print. If you do want to print straight from iPhoto, you can do so here.



Save...

In the bottom-left of the Print window is a small drop-down menu that says PDF. Click this and you can save the whole card in that format to be opened later.



Title

You will be prompted to give your card a new title, and a saving location. You don't need to worry about the Subject and Keyword boxes for your card.



Preview

Now it is possible to open your card in apps like Preview. Do so and you can make some small edits to the card, and print it using your own printer.

Create your card



Tool up

Professionally made cards look flawless thanks to the tools of the trade. Get hold of a good metal ruler, a sharp knife and something you can use to score your card.



Print it out

Print out your creation on high-quality card using the tips on the previous page. Be careful to check that your printer can print onto the paper you're using.



Cut it out

Place your card on a surface you don't mind getting marked. Use the ruler to ensure you get a straight line and cut along the line with your sharp knife.



Score!

Mark out the middle of the card carefully at the top and bottom edges. Place the ruler along them again and score along the line to make folding the card easier.

The finished article

Your creation should look absolutely stunning…



"Professionally made cards look flawless thanks to the tools of the trade"

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Master the editing tools in iPhoto

Get to grips with the powerful, but easy-to-use, editing tools offered by iPhoto



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 10 minutes

Many might think of iPhoto as just a place to organise and share your photos, but in reality it is also a powerful editing tool for your snaps. While it obviously can't compare with applications such as Photoshop and Aperture, the tools on offer enable you to make basic corrections to your images, as well as alter and improve the colours, add effects and generally make your photo stand out on the page.

This process can be great fun, and thankfully you don't have to worry about ruining your photo, as iPhoto's editing is non-destructive. This means that no matter how many changes you make, the app remembers what your original image looks like and allows you to return it to former glories at any time you want. So now you can edit away to your heart's content without worrying about what you're doing – perfect for experimenting with iPhoto's various editing tools. Here's our special guide aimed at newcomers to this simple, yet effective, app.



Simple edits, great photos

Use iPhoto's straightforward editing toolkit

Quick flicking
You can flick through your photos to view and edit them quickly using the arrows in the top-left of the photo viewer, or by using the bar along the bottom of the iPhoto window

Adjustments
The Adjust tab in the Edit draw enables you to alter settings such as Saturation and White Balance. If your photo is overexposed or has lighting issues, this is the first place you should head to



Shortcuts
You can access the settings in the Edit drawer without needing to click on them. Press E to Enhance your photo, R to access Red-Eye correction, T to Retouch and C to Crop

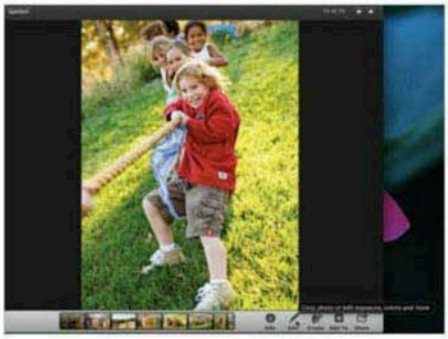
Crop
The Crop feature allows you to drag a box over the image manually, or you can choose from a list of preset sizes for your images, all of which are often used for printing

Knowledge base

Keeping track
If you want to save a number of different versions of your photo, you can either duplicate it from the Photo menu each time you make a change, or drag and drop the photo onto your Desktop. This will give you a backup of your image at each stage of the editing process so you can choose your favourite.

Spotlight When you're zoomed in, you can hold down the Shift key to help navigate. By doing this you will be able to click and drag on the photo to move around it.

Step-by-step | iPhoto Grasping simple edits



1: Open her up

First, choose a photo to edit and double-click it to view it in full. In the bottom-right you will see a line of five options; choose the Edit option.



2: Enhancements

The Edit panel will now slide in. To quickly boost the colours on your photo, choose Enhance. This is especially good for picking details in darker shots.



3: Zoom

In the bottom-left is a zoom control that is perfect if you need to be precise with your edits. When you zoom, a Navigation window will appear as a guide.



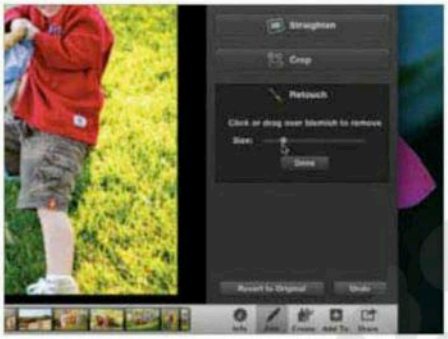
4: Red-Eye

Problems with red-eye will be automatically corrected when you click on the Fix Red-Eye option in the Edit drawer. Just like magic!



5: Keep it straight

Sometimes the horizon in a landscape shot won't be level, so the Straighten tool can help. Drag the slider left or right within the guidelines to make changes.



6: Touching it up

The Retouch option allows you to brush over blemishes and remove them. Drag the slider to increase or decrease the size of the brush.



7: Get in close

Be careful where you brush with this tool – you can always undo a mistake, but crossing between colours will confuse the tool. Zoom to make it easier.



8: Effects

In the Effects tab are options to alter the colour of your image, as well as add filters and effects like Antique and Boost to give your photo a fresh look.



9: Reverting

Remember, if you don't like what you've done at any point there is an Undo button at the bottom of the Edit drawer. Use revert to see the original image.

Discover hidden info about your photos

Find out everything there is to know about your photos with this excellent function

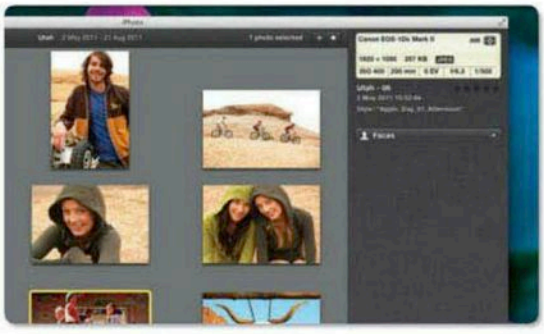


Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 10 minutes

While iPhoto is a great place to organise your photos, tag your friends and edit your shots to get the most out of them, it's also a surprisingly powerful tool for getting more information from your shots, especially as your iPhone and most modern cameras add a wealth of information to every picture you take.

The Info panel that opens up from the right-hand side of the window is just one example of this power, and it offers you a lot of options when it comes to learning more about your snaps.

The panel offers everything from information about the aperture of your shot to up-to-date information about who has been commenting and liking your image on Facebook. If you want to get more from your photos, the Info panel is an ideal place to start…

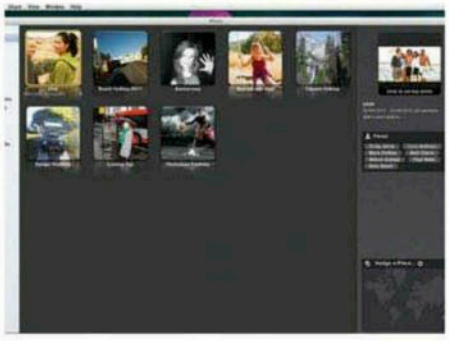


Step-by-step | **iPhoto** Get more from the Info tab



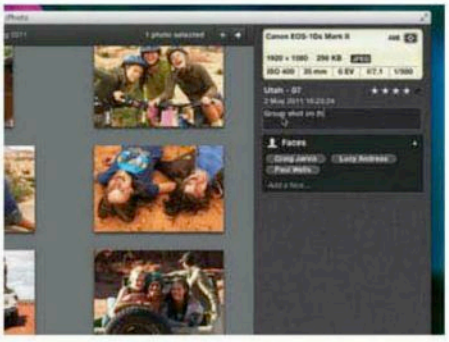
1: Open the tab

First, head into iPhoto and select an album or photo you want to view. In the bottom-right corner of the screen you will see a button marked Info.



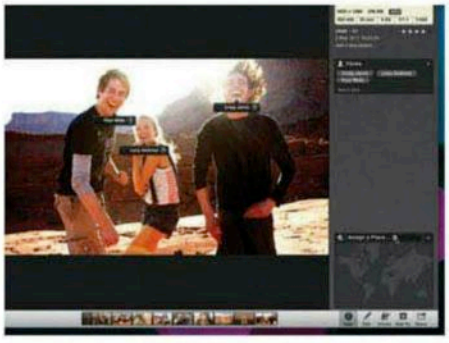
2: Key photo

If you have the panel open while you're viewing your albums, you'll be able to roll your mouse over the pic at the top and click to select a key photo for the album.



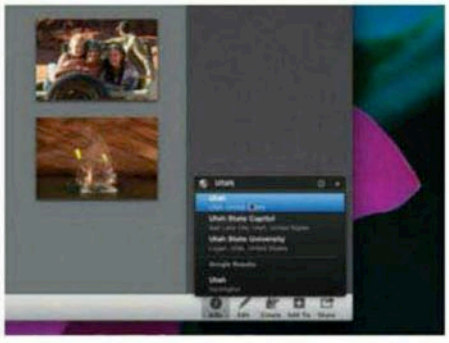
3: Description

You can edit the name and description of a selected photo, or an entire album, by clicking the text box underneath the photo at the top of the Info tab.



4: Places

Some photos may have location data automatically included, but if yours don't, you can geo-tag your picture by typing inside the Assign a Place option.



5: Predictive

As you type, suggestions will appear below. The Places system is currently powered by Google, so you'll easily find the area you're looking for.



6: Faces

You will also be able to see information about Faces in this sidebar – if you've tagged your friends, or there are some unknown faces, they will appear here.

Spotlight For more information on making the most out of Places, and learn how to add tags to specific areas, turn to the next page for our full tutorial.

Learn more

Understand the Info bar

Knowledge base

ISO, aperture and more

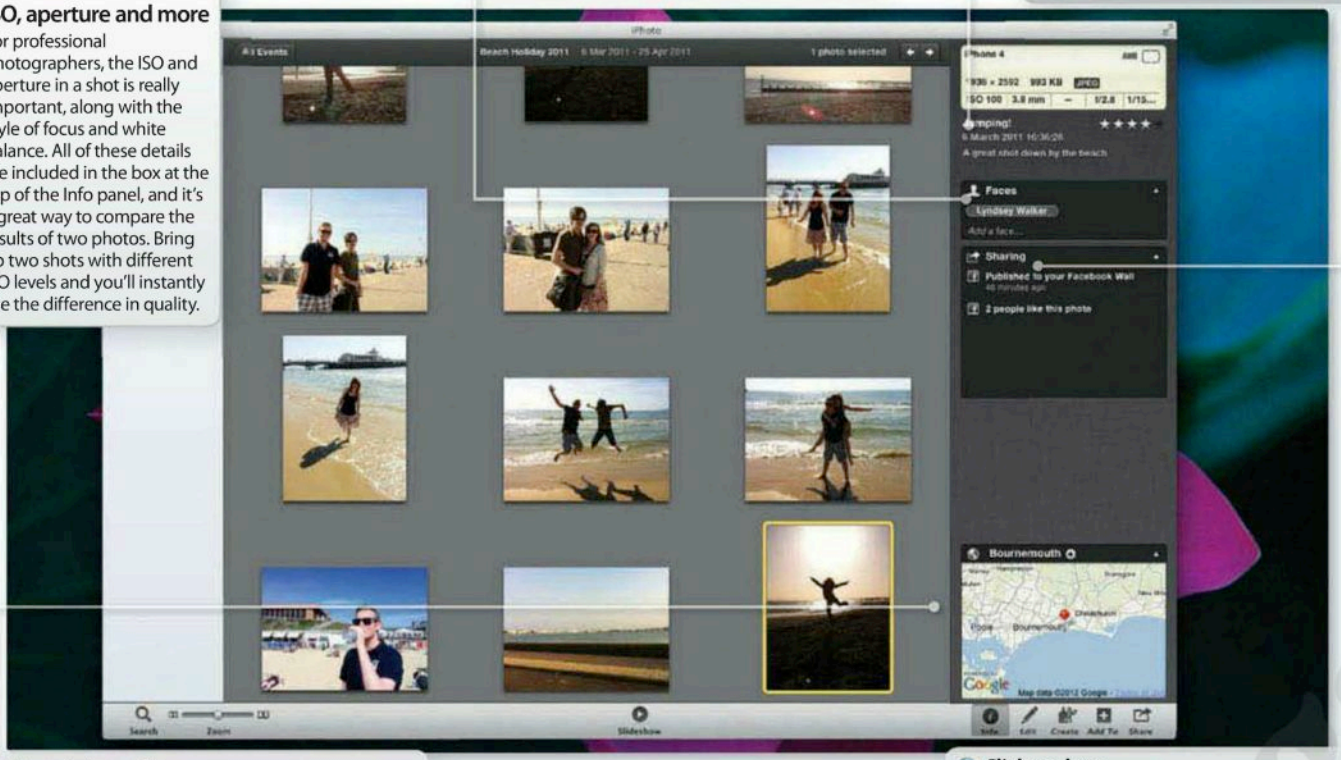
For professional photographers, the ISO and aperture in a shot is really important, along with the style of focus and white balance. All of these details are included in the box at the top of the Info panel, and it's a great way to compare the results of two photos. Bring up two shots with different ISO levels and you'll instantly see the difference in quality.

Faces

If you've linked your Facebook account to iPhoto you will be able to tag your friend's face by searching for their name. Once you've uploaded them, these tags will be automatically added on Facebook

Title and description

The title and description you give your image up at the top of the sidebar will be reflected on Facebook as well, although the rating function is iPhoto-specific, and will help you organise your images

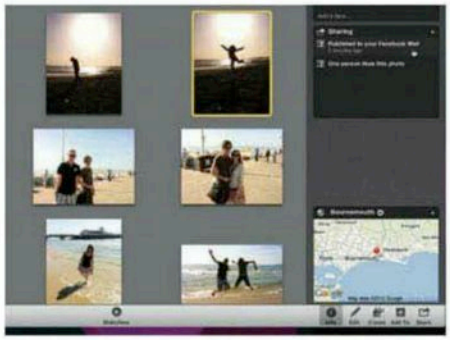


More information

All cameras will leave information in a photo file, and it will be included at the top of this sidebar. iPhones and other similar devices also have the ability to add location data automatically, saving you the effort of searching

Click and go

Clicking somewhere in the Sharing drop-down box will instantly open up Safari and then Facebook to the page that your photo is published on. This is ideal for checking your album online



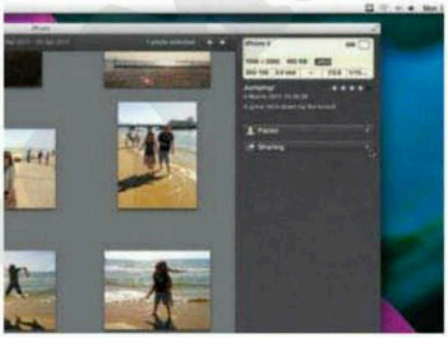
7: Sharing data

If you share an image to a social network, you can see the information in the sidebar. Here, for example, we can see who has interacted with it on Facebook.



8: Photo information

When you're viewing a single photo, the top of the sidebar will show a vast range of the image's metadata, such as the make of camera used and ISO levels.



9: Minimise

If you don't want to see a specific box, or if you just want to get rid of all the boxes and view key info, you can click the small arrows to minimise each box.

Multiple images
You can select more than one photo to display on the screen while editing, but iPhoto does not allow you to actually edit more than one shot at a time

Selection bar
Thumbnails of all the other images in the current album are visible at the bottom of the Edit window. Just click on one to bring it up for editing



Knowledge base
Copy and Paste
The Copy and Paste Adjustments from iPhoto's Edit menu can be used to paste adjustments like Lighten, Contrast, Tone and Saturation between images, saving time when editing multiple photos of the same type. Unfortunately, effects such as Vignette and Edge Blur must be applied to each shot individually.

Duplicate to replicate
Edits you make here will affect every copy of the image across your library. To create a unique, edited version of the original, duplicate the image first using the Photos>Duplicate command

Revert to Original
If you go too far with your edits, you can always click the Revert to Original button to restore the original version of the image

Combine multiple effects in iPhoto

Learn how to give your photos a timeless quality by mixing Vignette and Edge Blur effects together

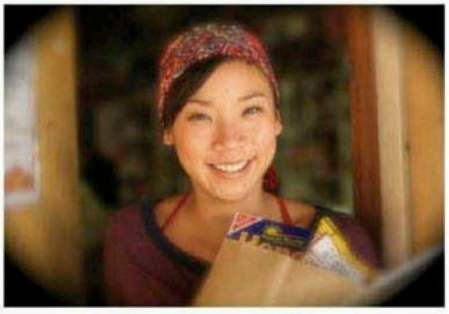


Difficulty: Beginner

Time needed: 30 minutes

The current version of iPhoto has an impressive array of tools to help you arrive at the perfect image. The Adjust feature of the Edit pane lets you tweak a selection of parameters including Exposure, Contrast and Saturation, not to mention Temperature, Tint and Definition. It's the Effects tab, however, that lets you instantly transform your shots into something rather special at the mere click of a button.

Editing in iPhoto is non-destructive, meaning that you can always revert to your image's original, unedited state. This gives you the freedom to play around with various settings and try out different combinations and degrees of each effect. There are eight different types of effect available in iPhoto's Edit palette, but for the purposes of this tutorial, we're going to show you how to apply a combination of Vignette and Edge Blur to give your photos an antique look.



Spotlight To quickly compare your edits with the original photo as you're editing, hold down the Shift key for a 'before' version and use it to toggle between the 'after' version.

Step-by-step | iPhoto Vignette and Edge Blur effects



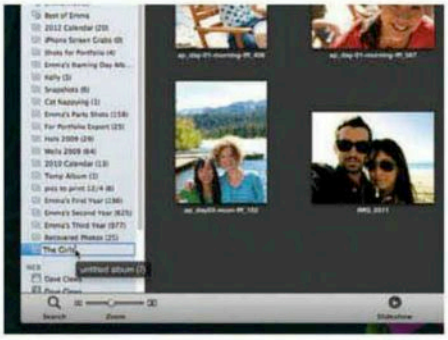
1: Select images

Open up your iPhoto app and select the photos you want to add to your new album. Selected photos will have a yellow border.



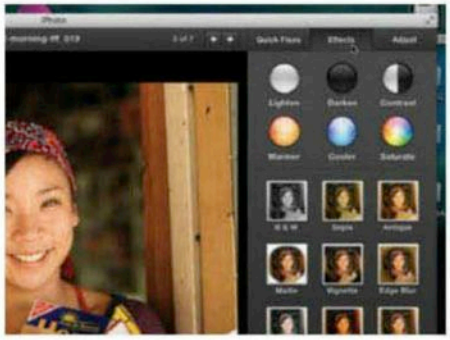
2: Create album

To create an album containing the selected images, click the Create button on the right-hand side of the lower toolbar and select Album from the menu.



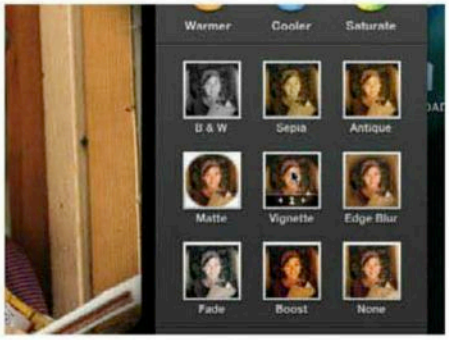
3: Name album

An untitled album appears in the sidebar. Type a name for your new album and hit Return. Double-click the first shot you want to apply the effect to.



4: Enter Edit mode

Click the Edit button in the bottom-right of the lower toolbar, then click the Effects option at the top of the panel that opens up.



5: Select effect

Select Vignette from the palette of effects. This applies a dark, oval-shaped border to your photo, reminiscent of antique prints from the Twenties.



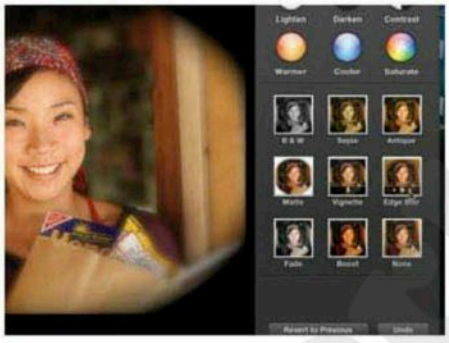
6: Set Vignette depth

Hover over the number 1 displayed in the effect's box. Two small arrows will appear. You can click on these to increase or decrease the depth of the effect.



7: Apply Edge Blur

As its name suggests, Edge Blur applies a circular blurring effect to the edges of the image. This pulls the viewer's focus to the centre of the photo.



8: Set blur depth

Set the depth of the Edge Blur effect in the same way as you did in step 6 for the Vignette depth. Experiment with the effect to get the right results.

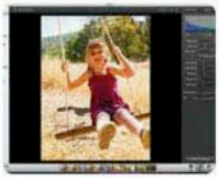


9: Next!

There's no save command as such, so to keep your changes, simply move on to the next photo. Or Revert to Original to start again if you're not happy.

Access your original image after editing

If you've edited an image using iPhoto, accessing the original shot is simpler than you might think…

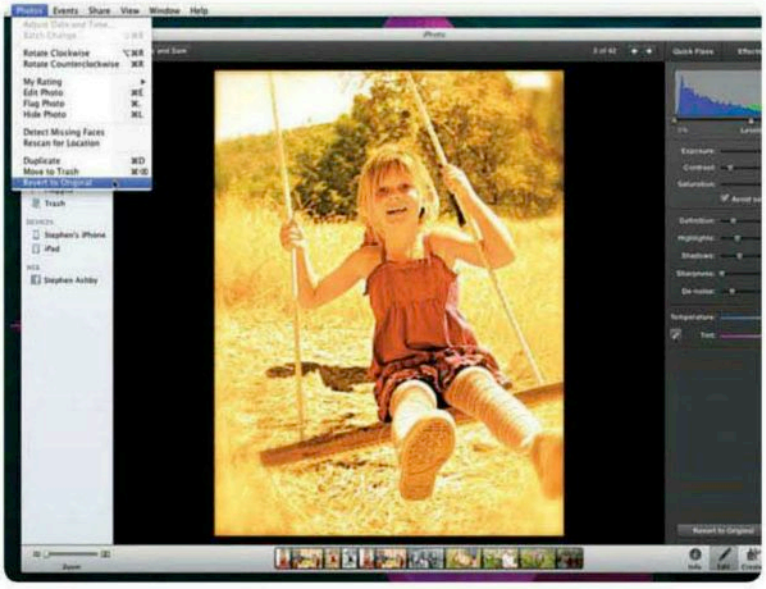


Difficulty: Beginner

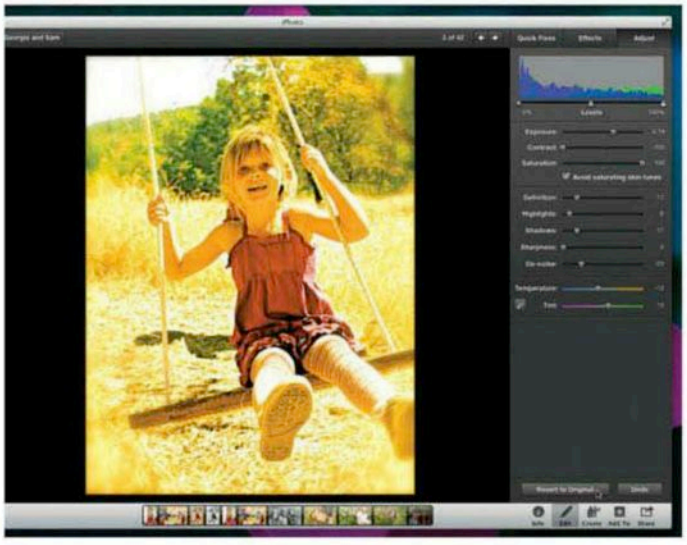
Time needed: 5 minutes

When Apple recently launched iPhoto for iPad, one of its most useful functions was the ability to compare your edited shot with the original image via a simple tap of a button. A lot of people got in contact with us and asked why the system wasn't so easy on iPhoto for Mac. They said the only way to compare their shots was by choosing the Revert to Original button in the Edit tab for each photo, or in the Photos option of the menubar.

In fact, there isn't any obvious way to perform the action of comparing your edited picture to the original, unedited version. While reverting the image back to its original is sometimes a valid option, for the more sizable edits it can take a great deal of time for the changes to process. In these situations, there is a much easier solution to the problem, and one that many an experienced iPhoto user won't even know about…

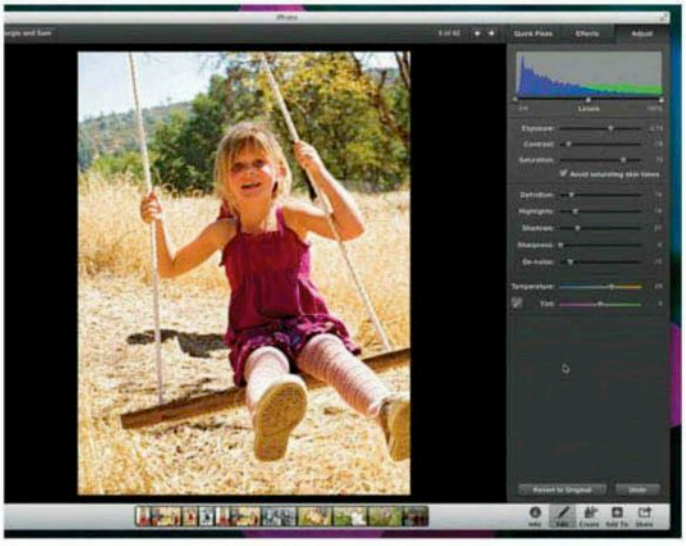


Step-by-step | iPhoto View original photo while editing



1: Reverting

In the Edit panel that slides in from the right is the option to revert your image to its original form. This is fine if you're unhappy with your edit and want to start over again, but it will take time to remove effects.



2: Shift it

While you're viewing an edited photo, simply hit the Shift key and you will instantly see the original image appear for as long as you hold. It's an instant change, so no more waiting for the program to catch up.

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Add transitions to your first project

Learning how to use transitions in iMovie will help you direct a fantastic debut home movie



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 10 minutes

If you watch a professionally made movie or TV show you will notice that between scenes the video will often fade, slide or switch to show you that you're heading to a different place. Small visual clues can tell your audience that something they are watching is about to change. iMovie offers a collection of different types of these transitions, allowing you to quickly and easily add them between your scenes and decide on how long you want them to last. The list in iMovie is extensive and enables you to be creative with your choices. Once selected, iMovie will automatically add your transition.

Adding them can make a real difference to your finished video, as well as help you visualise your scenes a little more easily. Read on to find out how to add and edit a transition, and for a few tips on when they will work best in your video. It's a simple process, but one that will add a bit of class to your productions.



Transition editing

Make your projects flow better

Don't go overboard
Transitions are fantastic and look great, but you don't have to put them between every two clips. Choose their placement carefully and you will have an amazing movie

Preview window
You will be able to see all of your transitions in full over in the Preview window on the right. They will appear immediately, so you can preview them straight away to check whether they work



Pure precision
The Precision Editor gives you complete control over the transitions you add to your video. You can choose exactly where the transition kicks in, as well as its length and precisely where it sits in comparison to the two clips

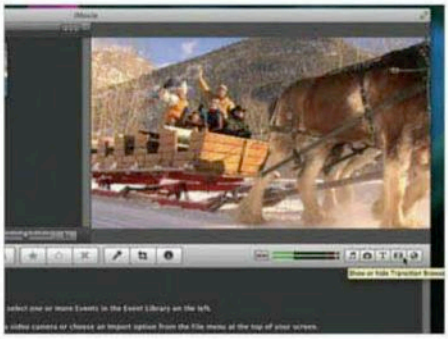
Inspector gadget
The Inspector window allows you to edit the basic parts of a clip. You can set a time and apply it to all the transitions, edit the type of transition you use, and change how much of the clip your transition takes up

Knowledge base

Theme
At the top of the Transition Browser you will see a Set Theme button. Click this and you will see a selection of themes to choose from. These will add transitions, captions and opening and closing scenes automatically so you just have to make small edits. This is great for creating a video quickly, but won't suit more serious projects.

Spotlight You can download extra iMovie themes from the web, so if you don't like the selection that are built into iMovie you can get hold of some more and try them out.

Step-by-step | iMovie Add transitions between scenes



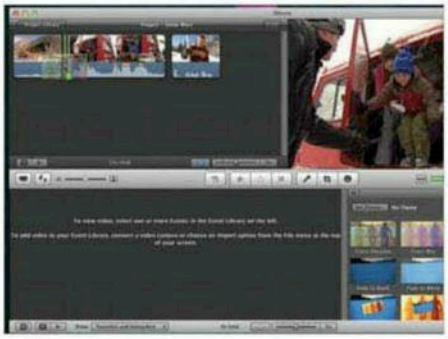
1: Transition Browser

First of all, open up the project you want to edit. On the right-hand side of the window are five buttons; click the Transition Browser option.



2: Preview transitions

A drawer will slide in and you will see a selection of transitions that you can use. Roll your mouse over one and a short preview of the transition will play.



3: Adding a transition

Once you've found a transition you like, click and drag it up into the project. The green line in the timeline denotes where the transition will be placed.



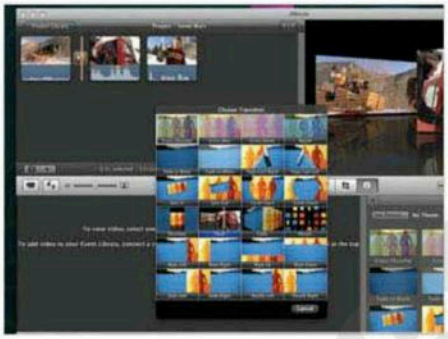
4: Transition editing

When you roll your mouse over the transition, a blue button will appear with a cog on it. Click and choose Transition Adjustments to make edits.



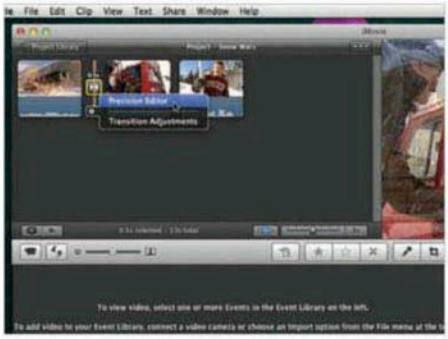
5: Overlapping

In that menu you can alter the transition's length. In Overlapping, you can also choose to maintain your project's length, or maintain the clip's length.



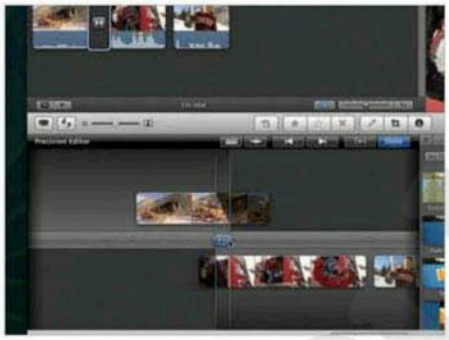
6: Live view

You can also change the type of transition. The benefit of doing this now is that you can see the transition in full in the Preview window.



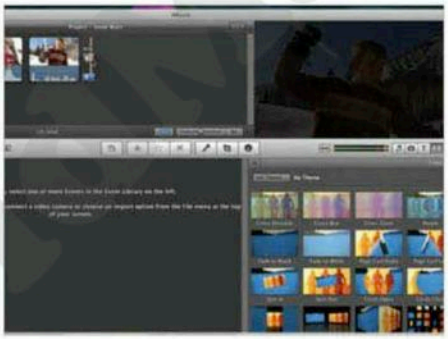
7: Precision editing

If you wish to change the transition to maintain the project's length, you will want to edit your clip in more detail with the Precision Editor.



8: Close control

In the panel that slides down, you will be able to drag the clips around to carefully edit where the fade between your clips starts and ends.

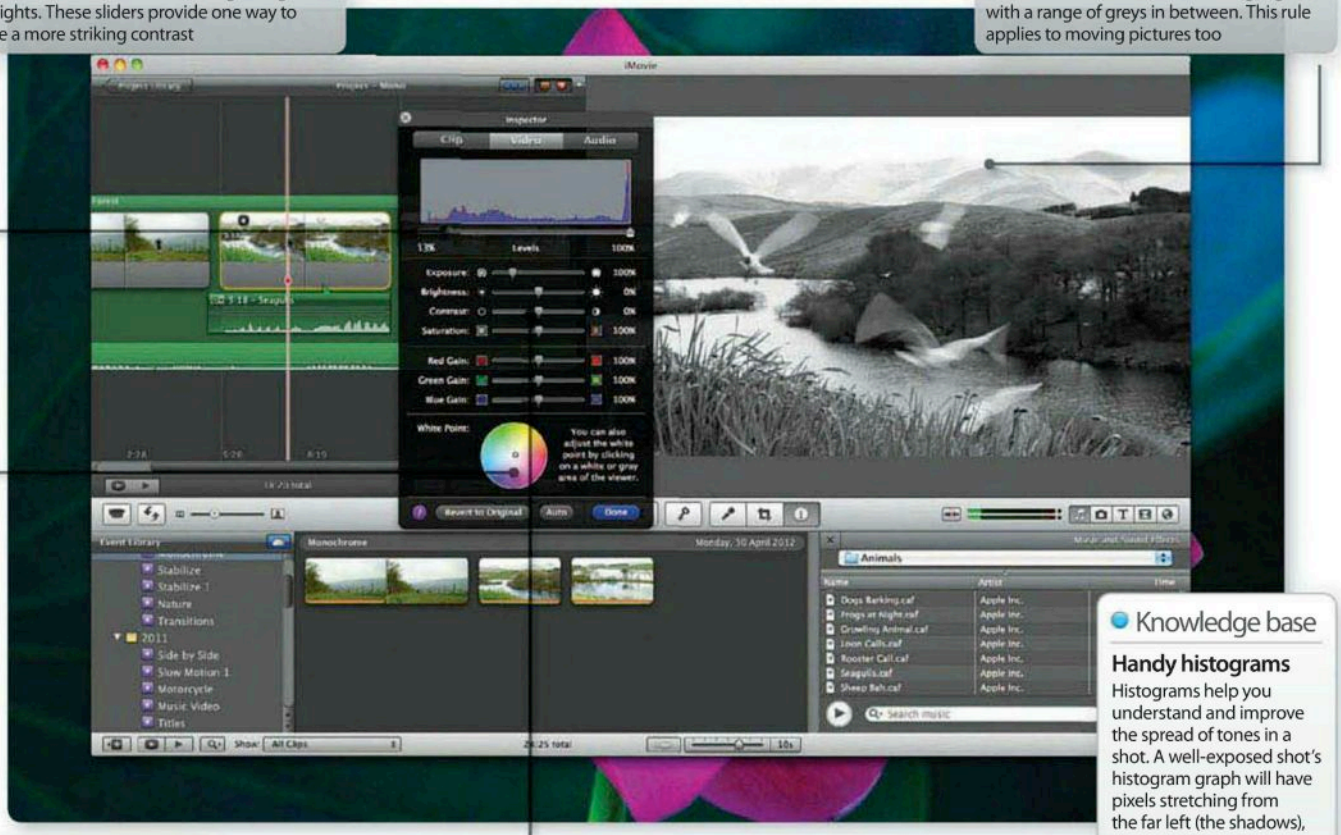


9: Fade out

You can also use transitions at the start and the end of your movie, so if you want your project to fade to black at the end you can drop in that transition here.

Levels
The slider on the left remaps the shot's shadows to a darker value. The one on the right brightens highlights. These sliders provide one way to create a more striking contrast

Tonal range
A decent black and white print should have some black shadows and white highlights, with a range of greys in between. This rule applies to moving pictures too



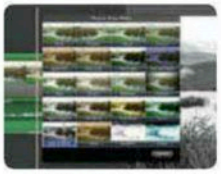
White Point
If you desaturate the shot using the Clip Inspector's Black & White filter, then you can use the White Point tool to subtly lighten or darken the tones of particular colours in the clip

Contrast
Desaturated shots can suffer from a flat wash of greyscale tones. By increasing the Contrast you can darken shadows, brighten highlights and make objects stand out

Knowledge base
Handy histograms
Histograms help you understand and improve the spread of tones in a shot. A well-exposed shot's histogram graph will have pixels stretching from the far left (the shadows), through the middle (the midtones) all the way to the right (the highlights). Drag the shadow slider right to darken over-exposed shadows. Drag the highlight slider left to brighten under-exposed highlights.

Create a stunning black and white scene

Does your footage lack a bit of wow factor? Never fear. You can use iMovie to add a sense of drama with a few simple commands…



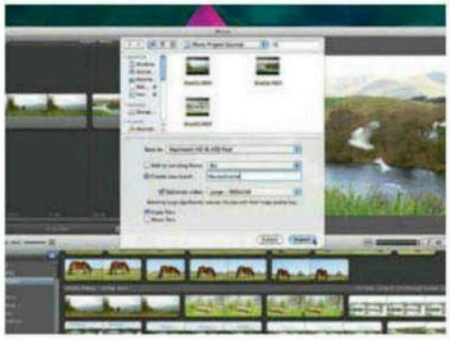
Difficulty: Intermediate
Time needed: 10 minutes

We take colour video for granted, so it can make you look twice when you see a monochrome sequence. By removing distracting colour information you can emphasise the shapes and textures of objects in the scene, much as a photographer does with a black and white print.

A black and white sequence can also add variety to a colour movie, especially if you use it to convey a memory or a dream sequence. In this walkthrough we'll show you how to remove colour to create more dramatic scenes. We'll also show you how to use the Inspector to tweak the tones so that you have a healthy range of shadows, midtones and highlights, instead of a bland wash of greys.

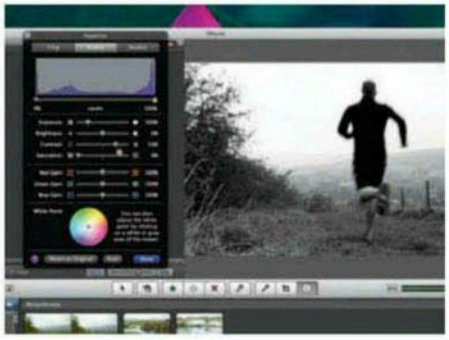


Step-by-step | iMovie Create an eye-catching monochrome sequence



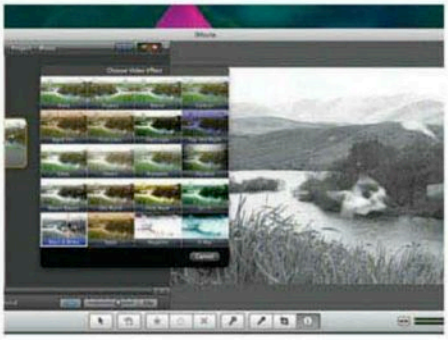
1: Import assets

Create a project with a 16:9 Aspect Ratio and a 30 fps Frame Rate. Click Create. Import the colour source clips from our disc into a new event.



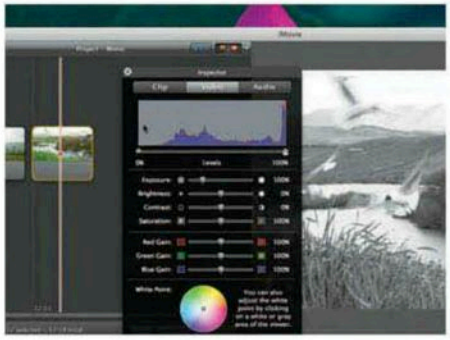
2: Increase contrast

Drag shot01 into iMovie. Press V and drag Saturation to 0% to remove all colour. Move Contrast to 53% for white highlights and black shadows.



3: Apply a filter

Add shot02. Press I to open the Clip Inspector. Click on Video Effect. Click on the Black & White preset to create a greyscale version of the landscape scene.



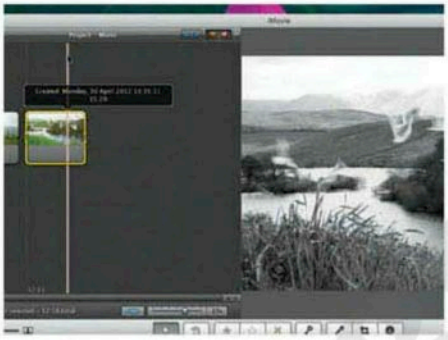
4: Check histogram

The shot looks grey and lacks contrast. Go to the Video Inspector. The histogram shows that there aren't any black shadows at the left of the graph.



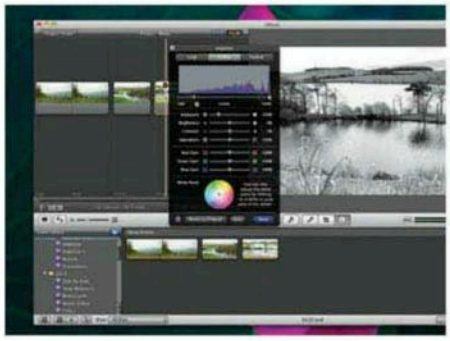
5: Adjust levels

Drag the Levels slider to 13%. This remaps the shot's weak grey shadow pixels to a darker level, increasing the contrast between shadows and highlights.



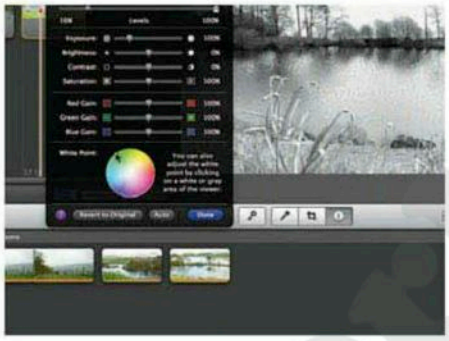
6: Playback

Hit the Spacebar to play the edited mono shot. The bright white seagulls now stand out more effectively against the dark background.



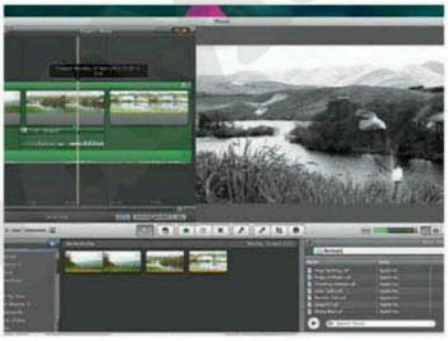
7: Add next clip

Add the third shot. Apply the Black & White filter in the Clip Inspector and drag the shadow levels slider right to 16% to create a more high contrast image.



8: Change White Point

The Saturation slider is at 100% because we used the Black & White filter to remove colour. Drag the White Point towards the green to lighten greyscale areas.



9: Sound advice

With no audio, our sequence is a little flat. Link the three shots together using the Forest.caf sound. Pop Seagulls.caf over the second shot to add real depth.

Cinematic movie transitions made easy

Use iMovie's Transitions browser to add a variety of Hollywood-style effects to link your scenes



Difficulty: Intermediate
Time needed: 15 minutes

Before the digital video-editing revolution filmmakers had to use transitions sparingly, because they were expensive and time-consuming. Celluloid editors had to optically process the dissolves or wipes between each shot and then splice the transitions back into the film reel. Video editors needed to simultaneously run two tapes from separate players and use a vision mixer to create the transition, which was then captured on the master tape in the video recorder. The beauty of non-linear apps like iMovie is the fact that you can add transitions quickly and easily. Here are some tips and techniques to reproduce retro cinematic transitions in minutes.

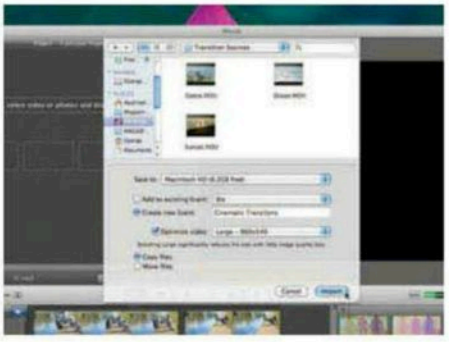


Step-by-step | **iMovie** Create classic celluloid transitions



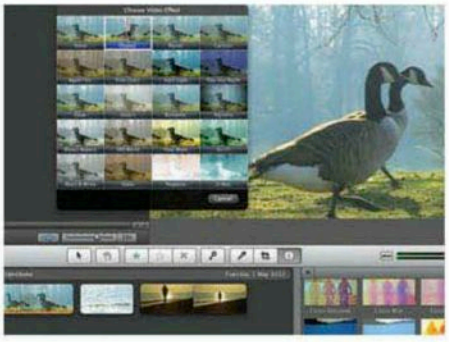
1: Create new project

Go to File>New Project. As we're mimicking traditional film transitions leave the Automatically add box unticked; think 'less is more'. Click on the Create button.



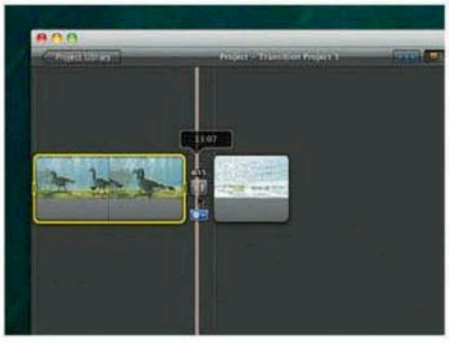
2: Import clips

Go to File>Import Movies. Tick Create new Event and label it 'Cinematic Transitions'. Browse to the Transition sources folder on the cover disc and select Import.



3: Flip the shot

Drop Geese into the Project window and hit I to open the Clip Inspector. Click Video Effect and pick Flipped. The birds now head right, leading us into the narrative.



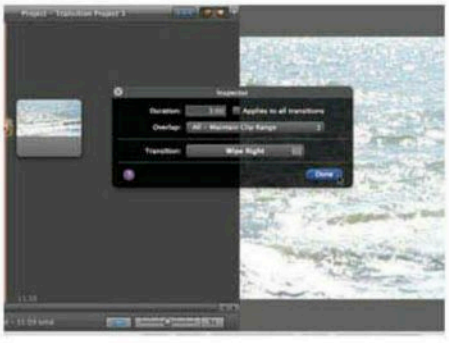
4: Total wipe-in

Add the Ocean clip to the Project. Click on the Transitions browser (or for a shortcut hit Command+4). Now drag Wipe Right between the two clips.



5: Watch your speed

The classic Hollywood-esque wipe follows the direction of the geese, but by default it's too fast. Click on the transition's gear icon and go to Transition Adjustments.



6: Apply alteration

Extend Duration to 2:00 seconds. Untick the Applies to all transitions box, then click Done. The transition should now reflect the speed of the birds.

Spotlight When mimicking classic Hollywood transitions stick with simple dissolves and wipes. These types of transition are less likely to date than more 'showy' ones like Mosaic.

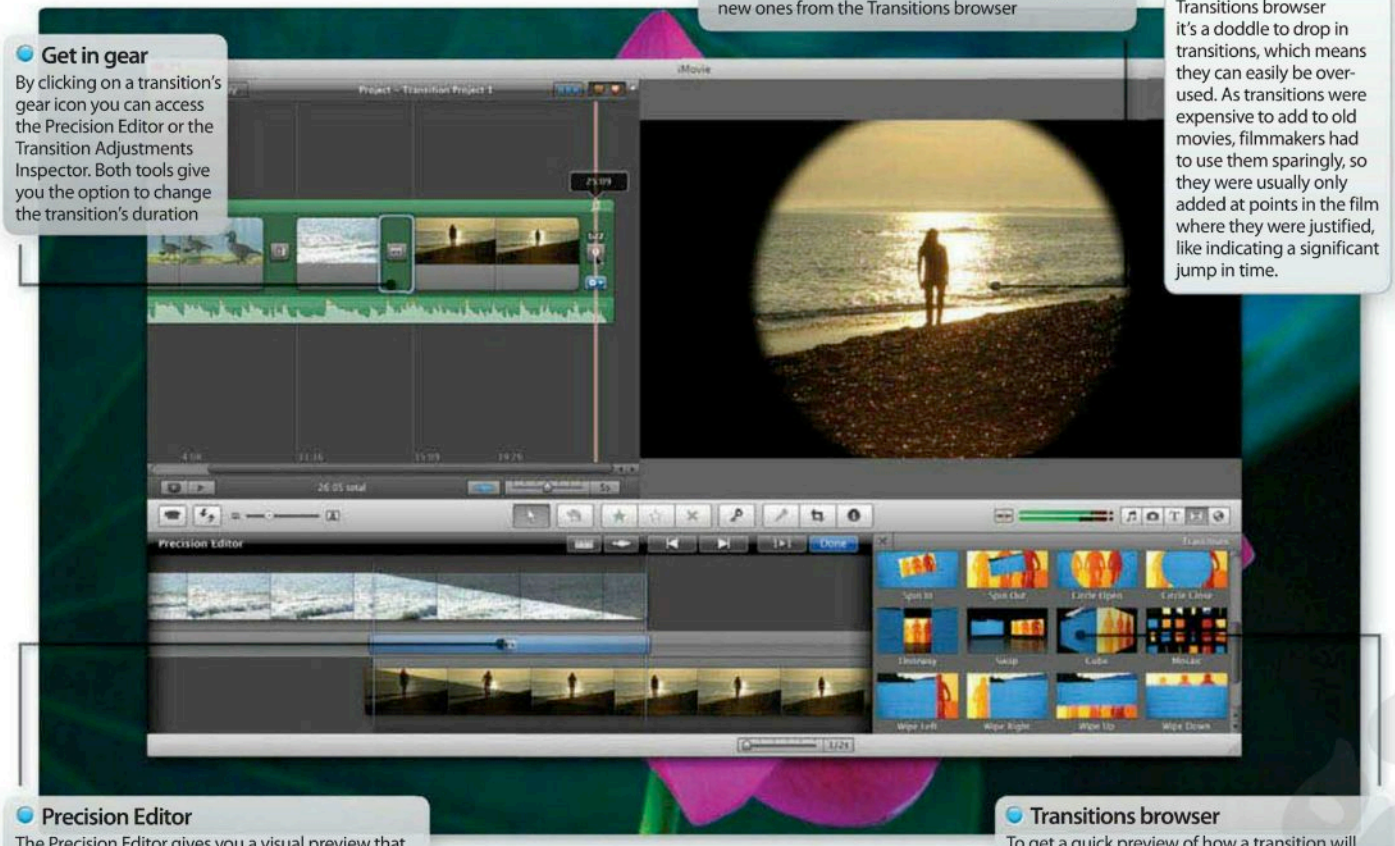
Add professional transitions

Create the perfect scene-switching effect

Inspector
As well as using the Inspector to change a transition's duration you can also click here to experiment with different types of transition without needing to drag new ones from the Transitions browser

Knowledge base
Less is more
Thanks to iMovie's Transitions browser it's a doddle to drop in transitions, which means they can easily be over-used. As transitions were expensive to add to old movies, filmmakers had to use them sparingly, so they were usually only added at points in the film where they were justified, like indicating a significant jump in time.

Get in gear
By clicking on a transition's gear icon you can access the Precision Editor or the Transition Adjustments Inspector. Both tools give you the option to change the transition's duration

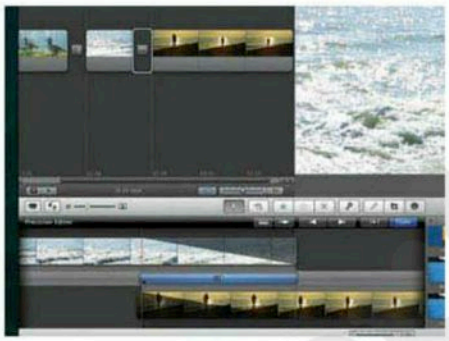


Precision Editor
The Precision Editor gives you a visual preview that demonstrates how the contents of two clips relate to each other. You can also drag the transition's start point to either slow it down or speed it up

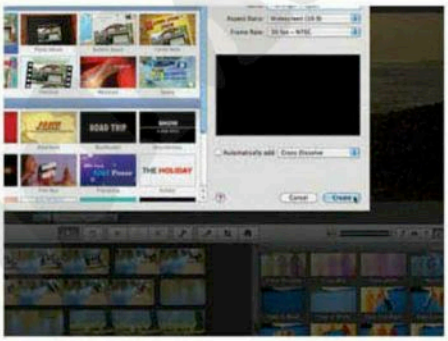
Transitions browser
To get a quick preview of how a transition will behave place the cursor over a thumbnail. The blue graphic will then mix, cut or wipe to the orange graphic depending on the transition



7: Curtain raiser
Add the Sunset clip and insert a Wipe Up transition. This suitably simple transition evokes the cinema's curtain being raised to introduce a new scene.



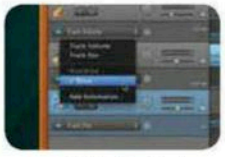
8: Precision edit
Choose the Precision Editor from the gear icon. Drag the Sunset clip left to increase the amount of overlap, then drag the start of the transition left to lengthen duration.



9: Circle close
We could fade to black like most classic movies, but given the shot's composition a Circle Close transition will help us frame the girl as she heads into the sunset.

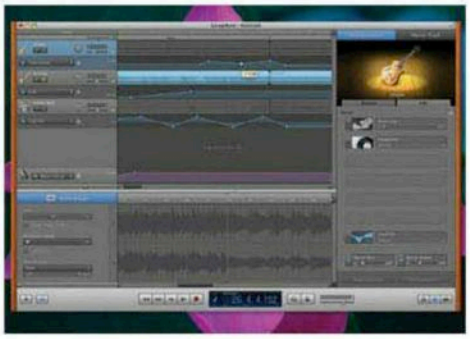
Enhance your music with automation

Introduce pro-standard volume changes and effects to your compositions



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 30 minutes

When you hear a professionally produced song, you'll notice that certain instruments and sounds get louder or quieter, pan from left to right or even have effects introduced to them over time. This is the work of automation and it's what really gives a track the polish that sets it apart from any amateur production. Automation is a predefined movement of a setting that is commanded by the producer of the track. In its simplest form it can automatically fade a song out as it ends but it can also be used to add all kinds of slick dynamics to a specific part in any music track. Fortunately, automation is available in even the most basic of digital audio workstations (DAWs), including GarageBand, allowing you to take your songs to the next level. It's important not to go overboard with this great tool (it's easily done), but used sparingly and tastefully, automation can really enhance your tracks. With that in mind, fire up GarageBand and follow our guide below to get started.



Learn to automate your tracks

Find out how to create dynamic tunes

A subtle bump
In the guitar track in this example, we've given the track a subtle volume bump around the guitar solo. This requires four separate automation points to raise the volume up slightly then lower it again later

Left and right
If you're looking for a slightly trippy effect, try automating a track's Track Pan and using automation to pan it hard left and right. Dragging the automation curve to the top pans it hard left, and to the bottom, hard right



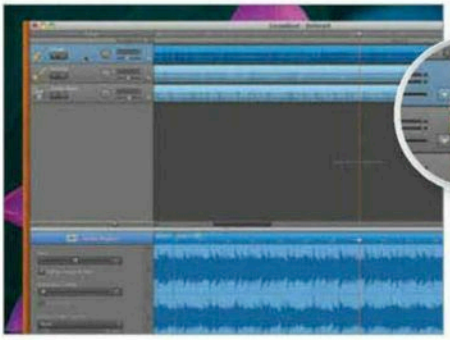
Knowledge base

Best practice
There are two schools of thought around automation. One is to keep things subtle and use it for things like volume boosts in guitar solos. The other is to create some real stand-out effects where instruments hard pan from left to right at speed and truly cut through the mix. The trick is working out what works best for the project at hand.

Made a mistake?
Every automation point you add to your automation curves can be undone simply by clicking on it then hitting Backspace. They can get quite fiddly, though, so make sure you're deleting the right one!

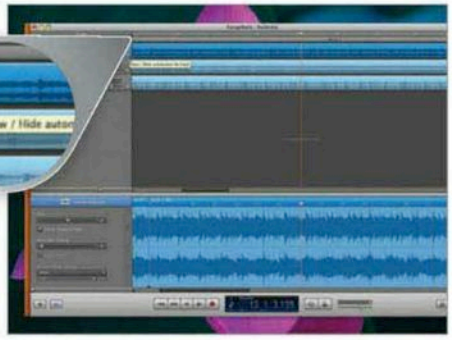
The automation curve
Although not technically a curve, the automation curve refers to the blue line that runs through every automation area. Moving this line up or down by adding automation points changes the effect it's working on over the song

Step-by-step | GarageBand Get to grips with automation



1: Pick a track

Open your current GarageBand project and select a track you want to add automation to by clicking on it. In this example we're working on a guitar track.



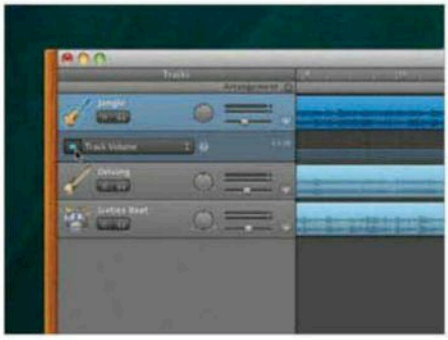
2: Find the arrow

Next to the volume slider, click the small down arrow icon to the left to view the automation area. This should appear below the track's audio waveform.



3: Select an effect

Click on the dropdown beneath the track name and select the effect you want to control via automation. In this case we're giving the volume a boost.



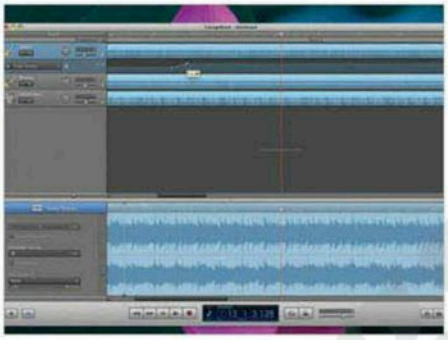
4: Turn it on

To enable automation, hit the square icon next to the effects dropdown. This will light up to indicate it has been activated and is ready for editing.



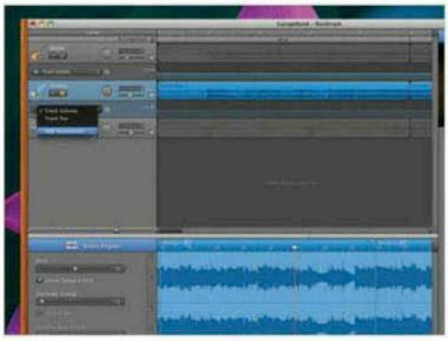
5: Set the start

On this track, we want to give the volume a boost. Find the appropriate point and then click on the red line running through the automation area.



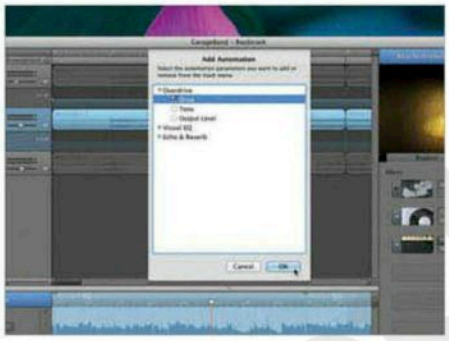
6: Add another point

Add another point directly after the first point, but this time drag it up a little to increase the volume. The higher you drag, the louder the track will play.



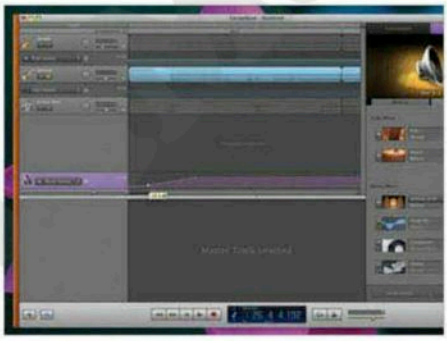
7: Automate more effects

Volume and panning are included as standard for every track, but to automate another effect, go to Add Automation from the drop-down effects box.



8: Add an effect

From the menu, pick an effect parameter from the list. The effects that appear will depend on which effects you've added to the track from its info pane.



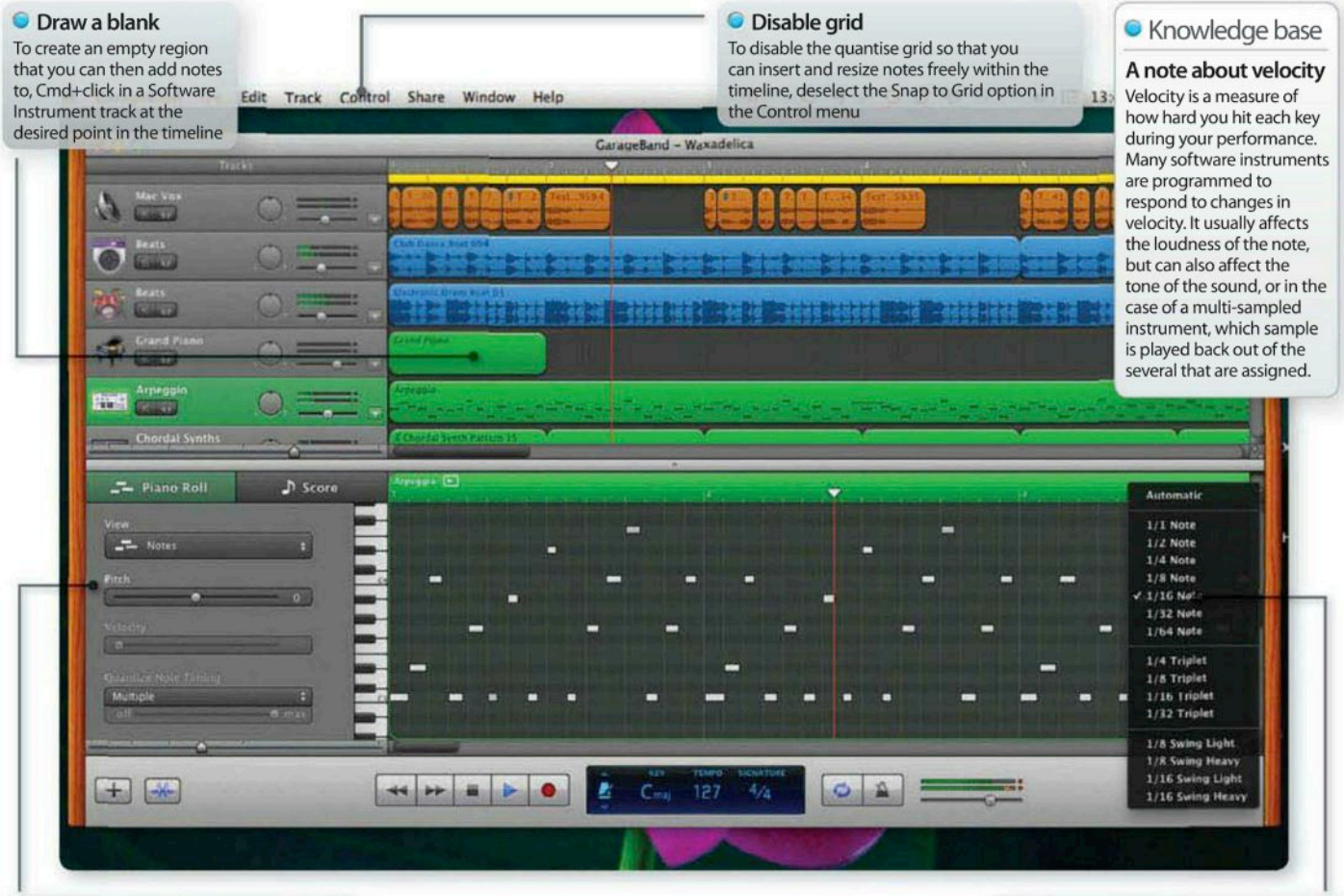
9: Automate the master

You can also add automation to your song's Master Track, which is useful for adding a fade-in or fade-out effect at the start or end of your song.

Draw a blank
To create an empty region that you can then add notes to, Cmd+click in a Software Instrument track at the desired point in the timeline

Disable grid
To disable the quantise grid so that you can insert and resize notes freely within the timeline, deselect the Snap to Grid option in the Control menu

Knowledge base
A note about velocity
Velocity is a measure of how hard you hit each key during your performance. Many software instruments are programmed to respond to changes in velocity. It usually affects the loudness of the note, but can also affect the tone of the sound, or in the case of a multi-sampled instrument, which sample is played back out of the several that are assigned.



Adjust controllers
In addition to editing note data, you can also edit values for performance controllers, such as Pitch, Velocity and Quantize Note Timing. Select from these menus to view them

Change quantise value
The Piano Roll editor is divided up into a grid according to the currently selected quantise value. Change this by clicking on this ruler button and selecting a new value

MIDI editing made easy

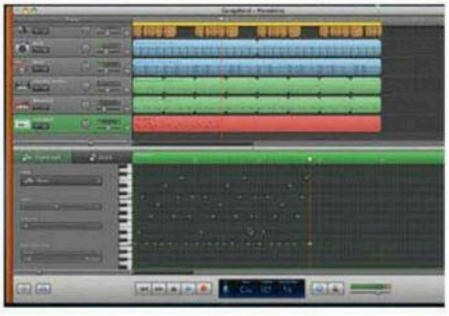
In this tutorial we show you how to grasp basic techniques for polishing up MIDI parts in GarageBand's Piano Roll editor



Difficulty: Beginner

Time needed: 20 minutes

Whenever you record a software instrument part in GarageBand, the performance is stored in the form of MIDI data, a string of information about each note's pitch, position, length and velocity. When it comes to editing the part, making changes to this information is all done via GarageBand's Piano Roll editor. It features a vertical keyboard, with each note represented by a horizontal line running across the window. The top-edge contains a timeline, against which the notes are aligned when the part is quantised, or corrected, so that they are rigidly in time. This edit window is where you'll be doing most of your MIDI editing, so follow these steps to get a grasp of the basic techniques.



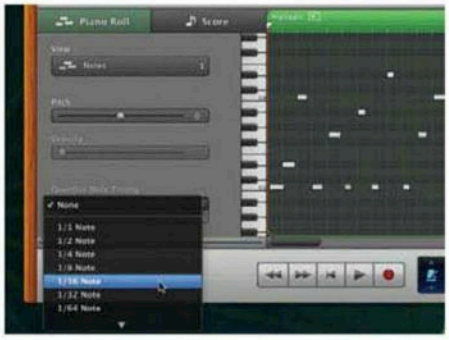
Spotlight MIDI stands for musical instrument digital interface, which was originally conceived to allow hardware synths to communicate with computer sequencers.

Step-by-step | GarageBand Get to grips with MIDI



1: Open Piano Roll

Double-click the MIDI region you want to edit to see the notes displayed as rectangular bars on the grid. Select Snap to Grid from the Control menu.



2: Quantize Note Timing

Correct timing issues by selecting an appropriate value from the Quantize Note Timing menu. The left edges of the notes will snap to the grid lines.



3: Select a note

Single-click on a note to highlight. You can select a group by drawing a rubber band around notes, and add single notes to the selection by Shift+clicking.



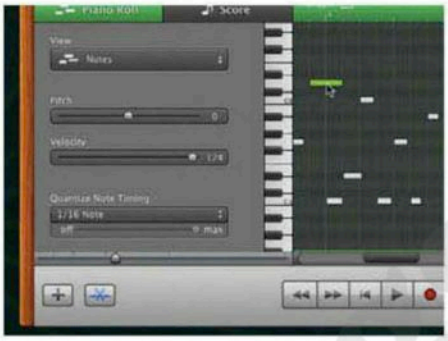
4: Move notes

If the original timing was ambiguous, the Quantize function may shift some notes awry. In this case, just drag the wayward note until it snaps into place.



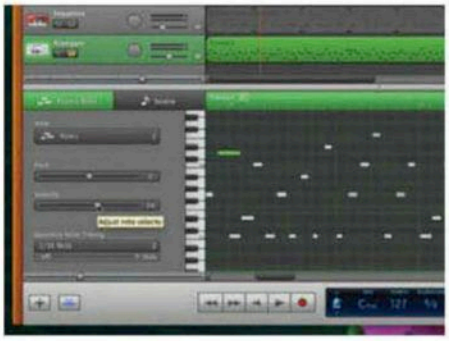
5: Change duration

Make notes longer or shorter by dragging the right-hand edges to the desired length. The longer the bar, the longer the note will be.



6: Transform pitch

You can shift stray notes to the correct pitch by clicking in the centre of the note and dragging it up or down to the correct level.



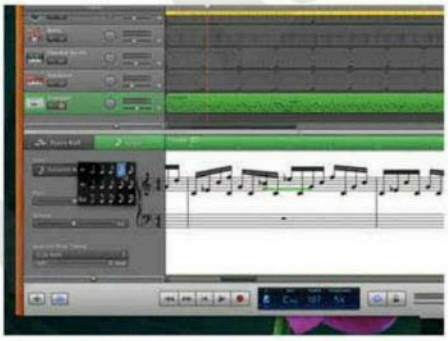
7: Velocity tweaks

The Velocity slider affects the loudness of the currently selected note – higher velocities being louder. The note's colour changes to reflect this.



8: Add or delete notes

New notes can be inserted by Cmd+clicking at the point where you want them. Unwanted notes are removed by highlighting and pressing Backspace.



9: Use new notes

To enter new notes of a different duration, click the Score tab and choose an appropriate value. Then flick back to the Piano Roll tab to enter the notes.

Use your Mac as a personal music tutor

Always wanted to learn an instrument? GarageBand's Learn to Play lessons give you all the necessary tools



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 20 minutes

There are many ways your Mac can help you be more creative, but one of the lesser-known ones is teaching yourself a new instrument with GarageBand's Learn to Play feature. Learn to Play is your Mac's built-in guitar or piano tutor, complete with video tutorials, interactive diagrams and songs to play along with to help you master your instrument. It's a truly wonderful feature!

What's more, you can even record the songs you play along with and get feedback on what you've played. You can download further lessons for each instrument, as well as artist lessons to learn both simple and complex versions of songs that they made popular.

Getting set up is easy and all you need is your Mac, GarageBand, an instrument to learn with and our great guide. What are you waiting for?

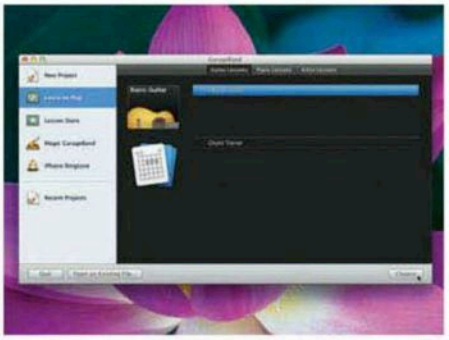


Step-by-step | GarageBand Learn an instrument



1: Lesson number one

From the New Project window, select Learn to Play in the main sidebar to view any currently downloaded guitar or piano lessons from the selection available.



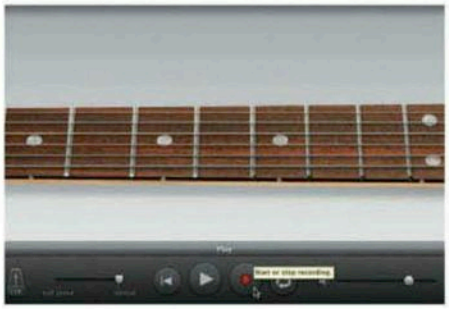
2: Select and choose

From the list of downloaded lessons, select the one you want to work on (by default your only option is Intro to Guitar), and click Choose to begin.



3: Learn or Play

In the lesson window itself, you can choose from two options: Learn or Play. Start off by clicking Learn to watch the video tutorial. Click Play to play along with the tutor.



4: Check your work

In Play mode, you'll play along with a virtual band and your tutor. Click Play and Record to start. View your progress afterwards by clicking My Results.



5: On the tab

In Learn mode, clicking on the note icon in the top-right corner brings up a list of different view options to show chords, standard notation and tabs as notes.



6: Fix the mix

Hitting the Mixer button brings up an audio mixer that lets you control your instrument's volume, the tutor's instrument and the backing band while you play.

Understand your lessons

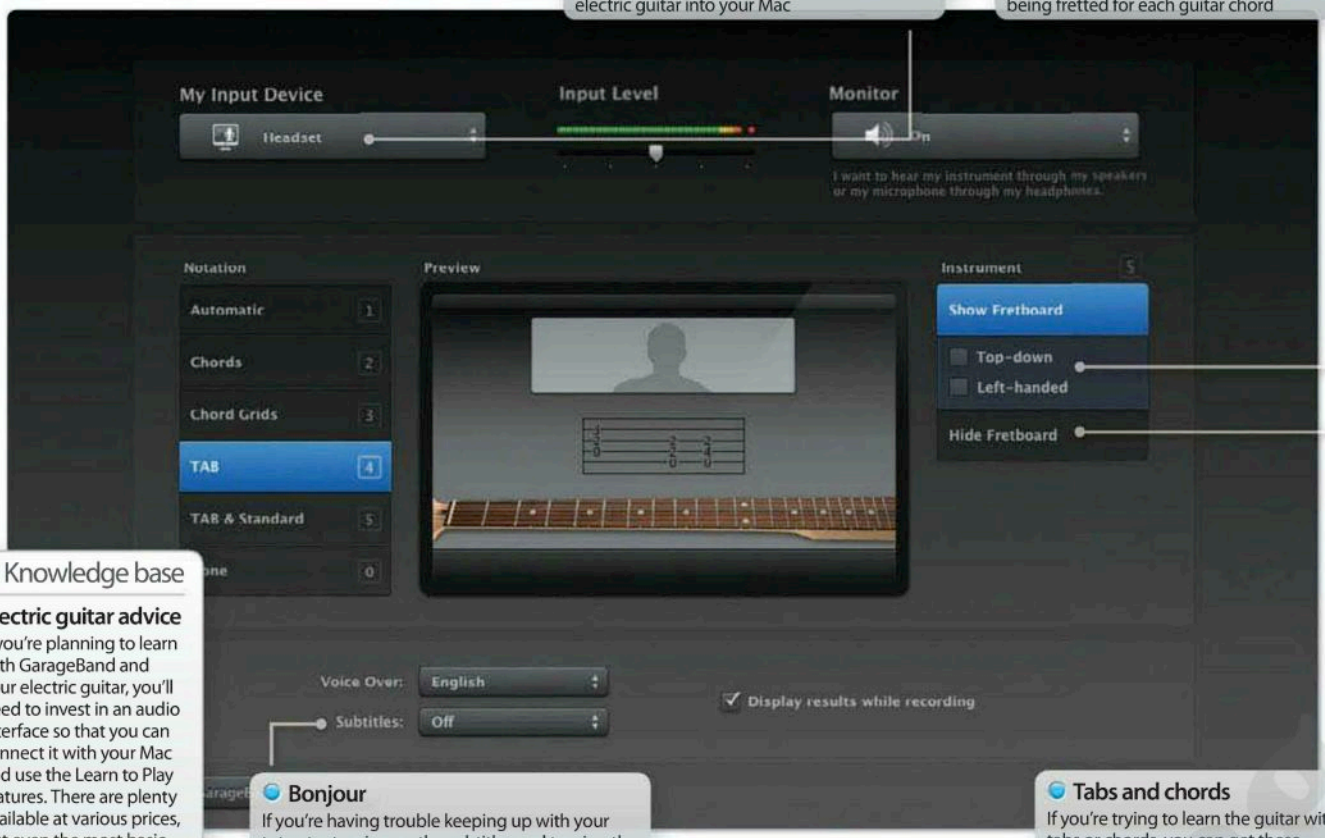
Get the most from your virtual teacher

Mic check

In the My Input Device drop-down list you can choose which mic or interface you use to pick up the piano or guitar you're learning on. This is particularly important if you're plugging an electric guitar into your Mac

A bird's eye view

Ticking either of the boxes underneath the Show Fretboard menu displays how the virtual fretboard is displayed in Learn mode. Adjust this to help you see exactly what's being fretted for each guitar chord



Knowledge base

Electric guitar advice

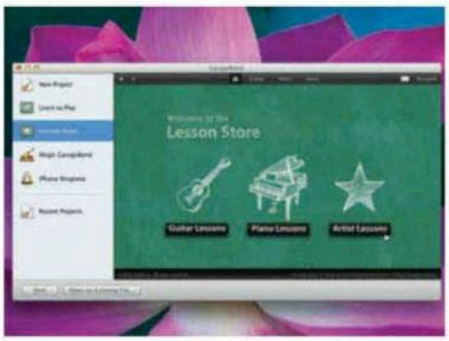
If you're planning to learn with GarageBand and your electric guitar, you'll need to invest in an audio interface so that you can connect it with your Mac and use the Learn to Play features. There are plenty available at various prices, but even the most basic ones will do if you're only just starting out.

Bonjour

If you're having trouble keeping up with your tutor, try turning on the subtitles and turning the voice down in the Mixer menu so you can focus more on the sounds your instrument is making

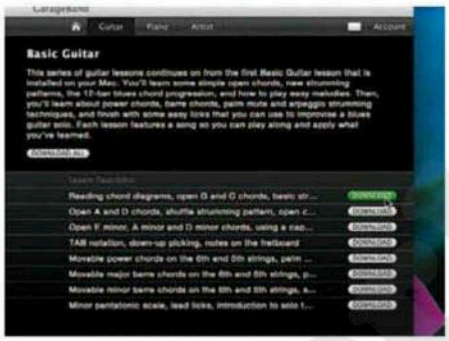
Tabs and chords

If you're trying to learn the guitar with tabs or chords, you can get these displayed when notes are played during Learn mode



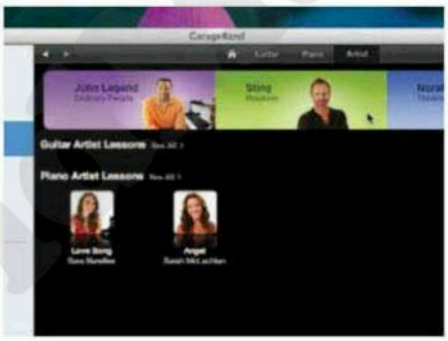
7: All the lessons

Back in the New Project window, clicking on Lesson Store in the sidebar will bring up other piano and guitar lessons that can be downloaded.



8: Grab the freebies

There are eight basic guitar lessons that can be downloaded for free – they cover all manner of chords and techniques. You can download all eight at once.



9: Learn from the greats

As well as generic lessons, there are also guitar and piano lessons from artists like Sting and John Legend. They'll teach you how to play their biggest hits.

Create and share amazing slideshows

Aperture provides the perfect solution to show off your newly edited snaps to your friends and family



Difficulty: Intermediate
Time needed: 30 minutes

Gone are the days of yellowing photo albums and getting messy while creating a photo collage – Aperture helps you organise your photos and makes it easy to group your photos into albums and events. You can easily access all of your photos in one place without having to crawl under beds, into the backs of wardrobes or around dusty attics to view your treasured memories.

Many decades ago, slideshows used to be the method of choice for showcasing photo memories. We've come full circle – but without all the bulky equipment. Your Mac can be your projector and screen, or even your iPhone or iPad if you prefer to keep things portable. You can carry your slideshow around by syncing it to your iPhone – meaning it's there in your pocket whenever you need it. Cumbersome photo albums or faded, dog-eared photos are a thing of the past. Slideshows mean that your photos always look great.

You can create slideshows to celebrate and remember lots of different occasions, from birthdays and anniversaries to great trips and holidays. There are a variety of built-in themes which combine funky backgrounds and effects to help you set the mood of your photos and re-live those memorable moments.

Slideshows aren't limited to personal photos though. If you're a professional photographer or artist, slideshows are an excellent way to showcase your work to prospective clients and businesses, and gives your portfolio that extra bit of edge to help you win that lucrative contract. Sync it to an iPad and let your audience interact with your images in their hands.

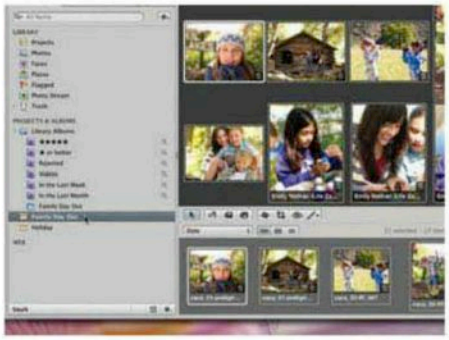
The slideshow process can be as long or short as you want it to be. Aperture has themes which do most of the work for you if you're in a hurry, but if you want to create something really personal to you, we'll talk you through the different customisations you can make, from adding text to setting your slideshow to the beat of a song. We've got it all covered!

So sit back, launch Aperture and get ready to learn how to make some of those memories truly treasured.



"Cumbersome photo albums or faded, dog-eared photos are a thing of the past"

Step-by-step | **Aperture** Create and share amazing slideshows



1: Get started

Under Projects & Albums, select a project to use. Click one image and hold down Cmd+A to highlight all the images together. This selects them for the slideshow.



2: Create the slideshow

Once you've highlighted your photos, jump to the File menu, select New and Slideshow from the list of choices that appear. Now it's time to get creating!



3: Choose your theme

Your theme is going to set the tone for your slideshow, so it's important that you choose wisely. Select a theme on the left-hand side and give it a name.

Become a slide expert

Display your shots however you like

Playhead
The Playhead can quickly preview your slideshow in the project viewer. Using your mouse, drag the Playhead across the timeline to see your slideshow in progress – the slower you go, the more detail you see

Change the theme
Having a variety of themes is cool, but too much choice isn't always great. If your theme isn't working as you want, clicking the Themes button helps you switch

Image scale
By clicking on the image in the main Preview window, you can use the Image Scale tool to zoom in or out of the photo. Simply click the slider and drag it left or right



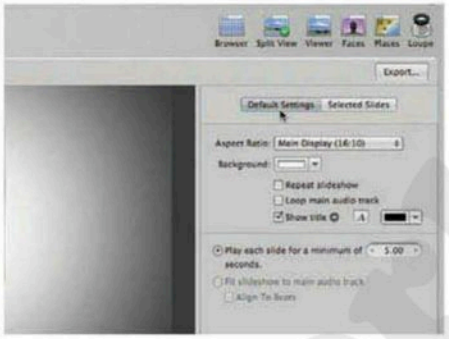
Viewer
Using the three viewing icons, you can change how you view your timeline with a single click. The filmstrip and grid options offer the best editing experience, but the list option contains handy photo information

Knowledge base

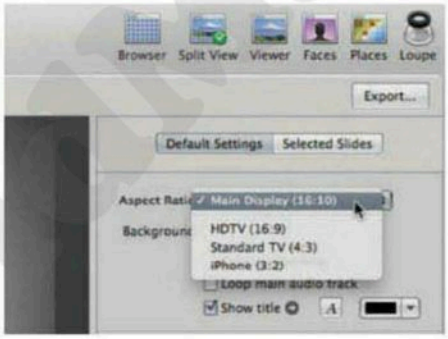
Themes
Aperture's built-in themes are a great way to give your slideshows a professional or fun edge. However, each theme has different customisation options – some themes have more options than others. If you want to have control, the Classic theme offers the most choice for personalisation, but as a trade-off, sacrifices a funky background or borders.



4: Changing faces
Your slideshow should appear in the timeline at the bottom of the interface. Click the Display Settings Panel button and it opens up a new box of options.



5: Personalise it
You have the option of applying settings to all slides, or creating custom settings for each individual slide. Let's look at the Default Settings…



6: Choose your size
You can use the Default Settings tab to control the Aspect Ratio, which is the size of the slideshow screen. Choose the device you will be showcasing from.

Step-by-step | Aperture Create and share amazing slideshows



7: Selected Slides

The Selected Slides tab offers you more tools to personalise each slide individually. The options change according to the chosen theme.



8: Timing matters

Keep your audience's attention and vary the timings of each slide. Use the arrows to increase or reduce – the minimum setting will vary between themes.



9: Other settings

You can also make smaller additions such as changing background colours, adding borders to photos, and adjusting photo size using the Inset tool.



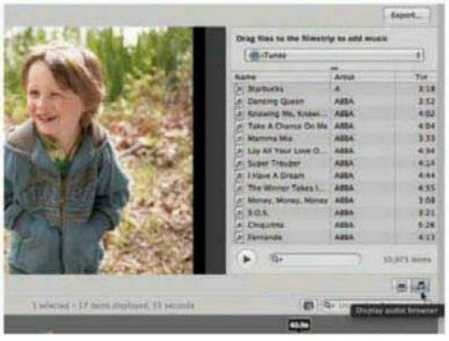
10: Smooth transitions

Transitions are animations taking you from one slide to the next. Check the Transitions box and select from the menu. See your choice in the mini Preview box.



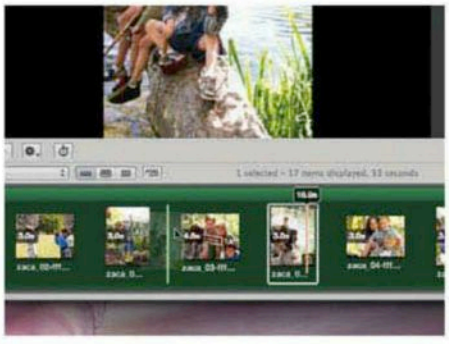
11: Caption

Adding text is a great way to caption your photos. Tick the Text box and choose Custom from the menu. Use the A icon to change font, size and colour.



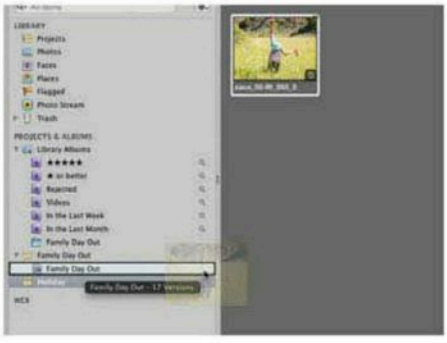
12: Add music

Aperture is integrated with your music library. Click the music note and browse iTunes to find the perfect soundtrack. Drag the song to the timeline.



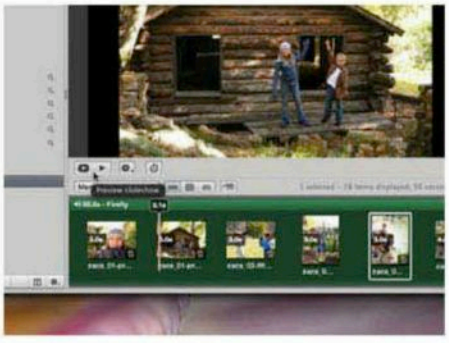
13: Change the order

Want to re-order your slides? No problem. Click on the slide you wish to move and drag towards the desired location and release when you see the green bar.



14: Something missing?

It's easy to add more pictures if you need to. Locate your additional photos in the Project Library and drag them to the slideshow in the Projects & Albums list.



15: Preview it

Let's make sure your slideshow looks and sounds amazing. Select either of the two play icons, and view your slideshow in full-screen or in the Preview window.

Spotlight Using the Ken Burns theme gives more of a movie feel to your slideshow. It automatically adds zoom and pan to each photo to create the illusion of live film.

Perfect the project

Amazing tools for greater control

Change it up

You can easily change the way the Aperture interface looks by using the View menu. Click Browser and select the Swap Position option – you can use this to rearrange the windows to suit your workflow

Made a mistake?

If you're working on a slide and you don't like the changes you've made, you can reset the slide back to its original state. Simply click on the cog icon and choose Reset Selected Slide



Keep to the beat

Impress your family and friends by keeping your slideshow to the beat. Select Align Slides to Beats – this tool analyses your chosen soundtrack and sets the slides to change in time with the song

Let Aperture decide

Not sure how best to arrange your photos? Let Aperture do it for you. Use the drop-down menu to re-order your photos according to a variety of options such as date, rating and file size

Knowledge base

Music

Adding music to your slideshow is a great way to reinforce the mood you want to convey – whether that's romance, fun or nostalgia. In addition to integrating with your iTunes Library, Aperture offers its own selection of music from a variety of different genres to soundtrack your slideshow. Click the drop-down menu in the audio browser and select Theme Music.



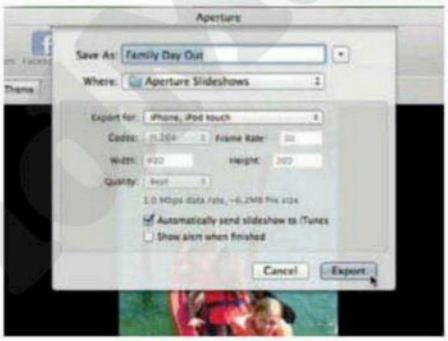
16: Prepare to share

You've just created an amazing slideshow. It's time to export and share it with the world. Aperture helps you do this in a few easy steps. Click the Export button.



17: Choose your platform

Aperture optimises your slideshow, meaning your slideshow will look fantastic. Using the Export for menu, select your chosen platform.



18: Share it!

It's time to unveil your slideshow! Click Export and Aperture will export your slideshow in the background. You can locate it in iTunes and sync it to your iPhone.

Optimise your project for YouTube

Want your amazing movie to go viral on the web? First, it needs to be prepared…



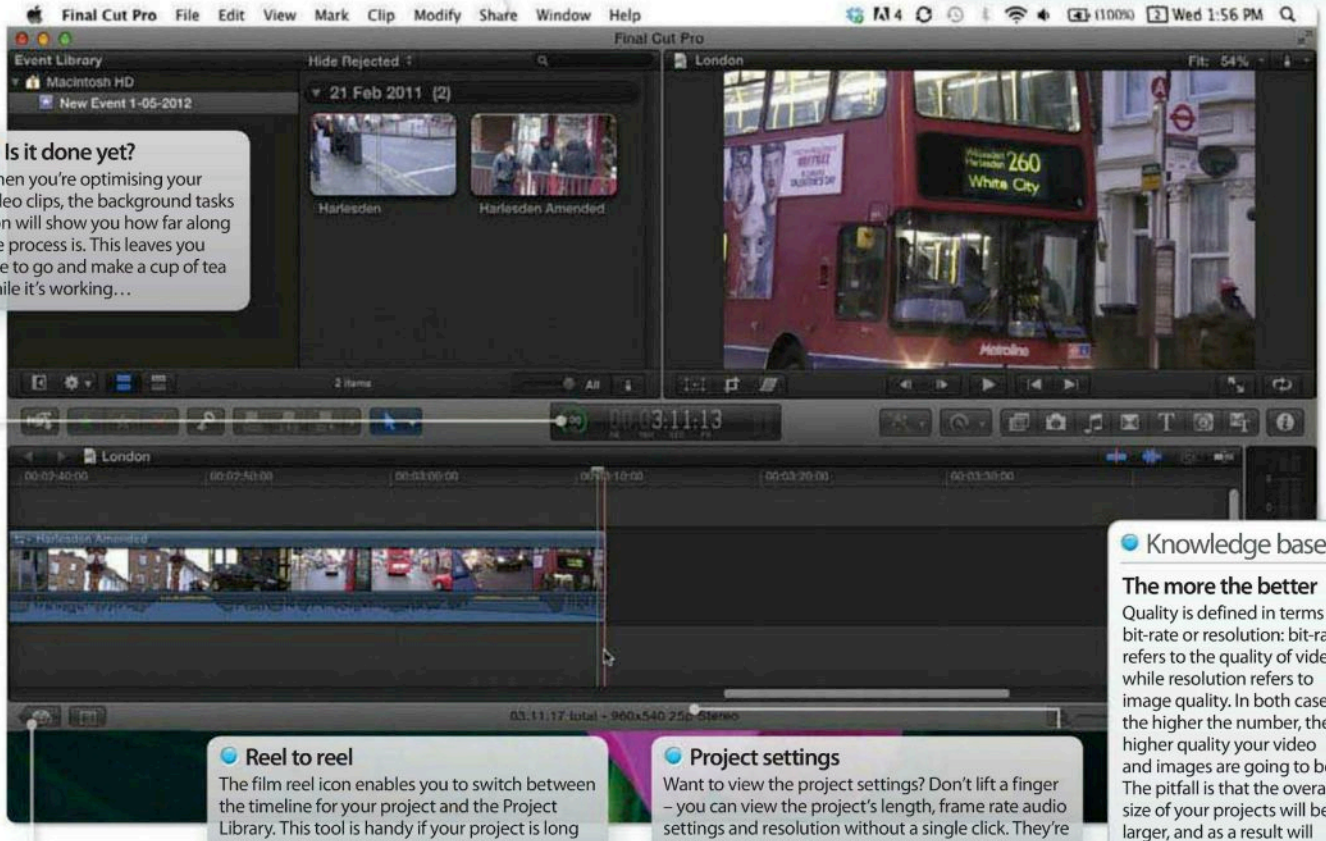
Difficulty: Intermediate
Time needed: 20 minutes

Pixelated, distorted videos are a thing of the past thanks to modern technology. Applications like Final Cut Pro X and iMovie have revolutionised the movie industry – a decade ago you would have needed a raft of expensive equipment to make a short film, but these days you only need a computer and a decent video or digital camera. Most new cameras have HD capabilities, which can mean that video projects can become inflated in size, resulting in problems sharing them with other people digitally or physically. Want to share your creation with the world? Final Cut Pro X has a few tools to help reduce the size of your project so you can easily share it on both the web or on DVD – without sacrificing any of the original quality. Get comfy, fire up Final Cut Pro X and turn your home movie into the next online sensation.



Navigating Final Cut Pro

Find your way around the app



Share and share alike
You don't have to share to YouTube – the Share menu enables you to export your projects to Facebook, DVD, Apple Mail, iPhone and a whole host of other platforms with just a few simple clicks

Is it done yet?
When you're optimising your video clips, the background tasks icon will show you how far along the process is. This leaves you free to go and make a cup of tea while it's working…

Reel to reel
The film reel icon enables you to switch between the timeline for your project and the Project Library. This tool is handy if your project is long and you want a compressed view of it

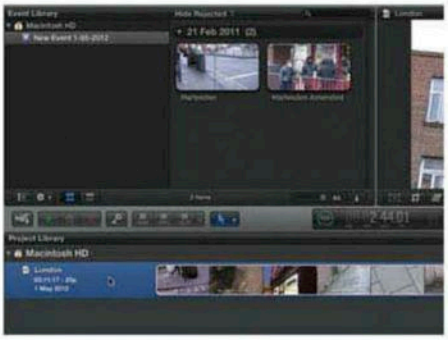
Project settings
Want to view the project settings? Don't lift a finger – you can view the project's length, frame rate audio settings and resolution without a single click. They're handily located at the bottom of the interface

Knowledge base

The more the better
Quality is defined in terms of bit-rate or resolution: bit-rate refers to the quality of video while resolution refers to image quality. In both cases, the higher the number, the higher quality your video and images are going to be. The pitfall is that the overall size of your projects will be larger, and as a result will take longer to export.

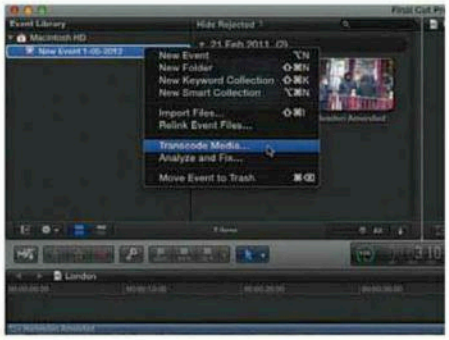
Spotlight YouTube isn't the only platform to share your videos – you can also upload projects to Vimeo, a site specialising in homemade content. Visit **vimeo.com** for more information.

Step-by-step | Final Cut Pro X Prepare your video for sharing



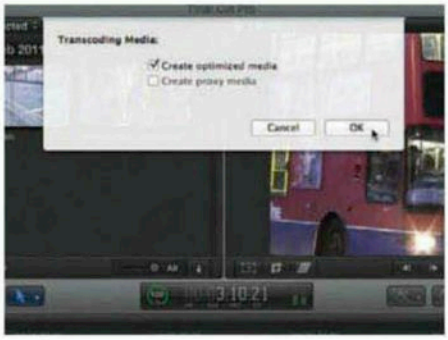
1: Get started

From Final Cut Pro's Project Library, double-click a project to open it. If the Project Library isn't in view, select Show Project Library from the Window menu.



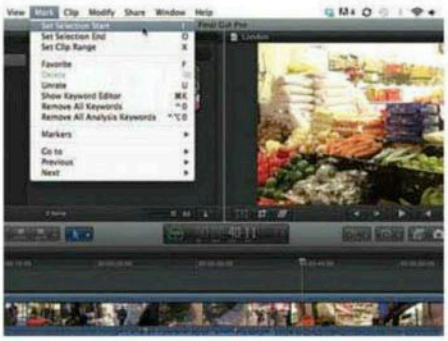
2: Process your video

For top results, convert your video using the Transcode Media tool. In the Event Library, right-click on the Event where your clips are stored and pick Transcode Media.



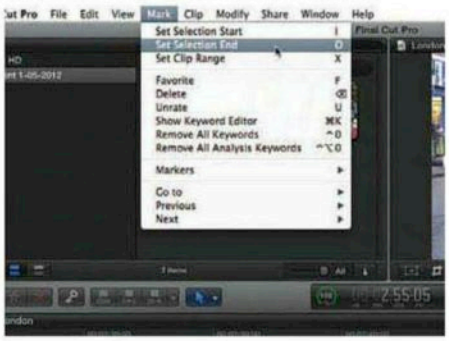
3: Optimized or proxy?

Optimized media is the option of choice; it changes the format into a Final Cut Pro format, ensuring the best quality and performance from your video.



4: On your marks…

Markers define the start and end of a project. Move the playhead to where you want the project to begin. Click on the Mark menu and choose Set Selection Start.



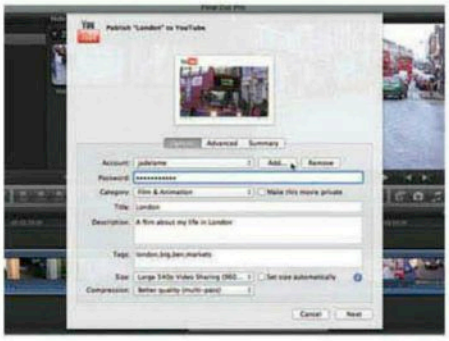
5: Choose your ending

All great stories have a beginning and an end. Move the playhead to where you want the project to finish. Click on the Mark menu and choose Set Selection End.



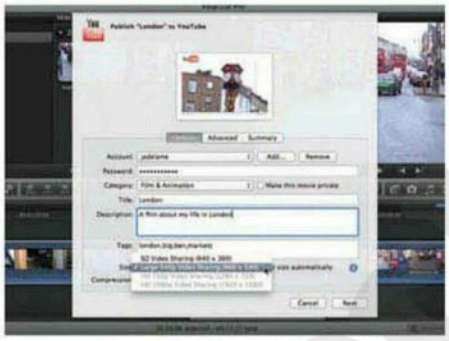
6: Prepare to share

YouTube is the best – and easiest – platform on which to share your projects with the online community. Just go to the Share tab and select YouTube.



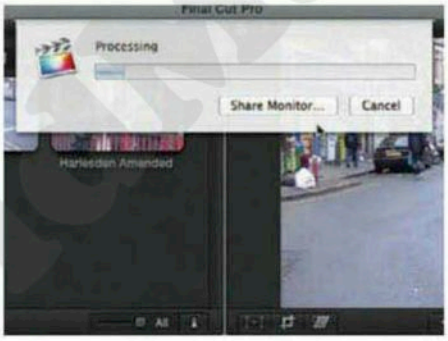
7: It's all in the detail

Add your YouTube account details to ensure a flawless sharing process. Give your film a title, a category and use the Description box to give a brief synopsis.



8: Size matters

Bigger is better in the world of film. Choose the highest numbers on offer for size; these are at the bottom of the menu. Higher numbers mean better quality.



9: Publish to the web

Hit Next and then Publish, and wait for those lucrative film offers to come flooding in. You read it here first – don't forget to mention us in your Oscars speech!

We're excited about: TurboCollage

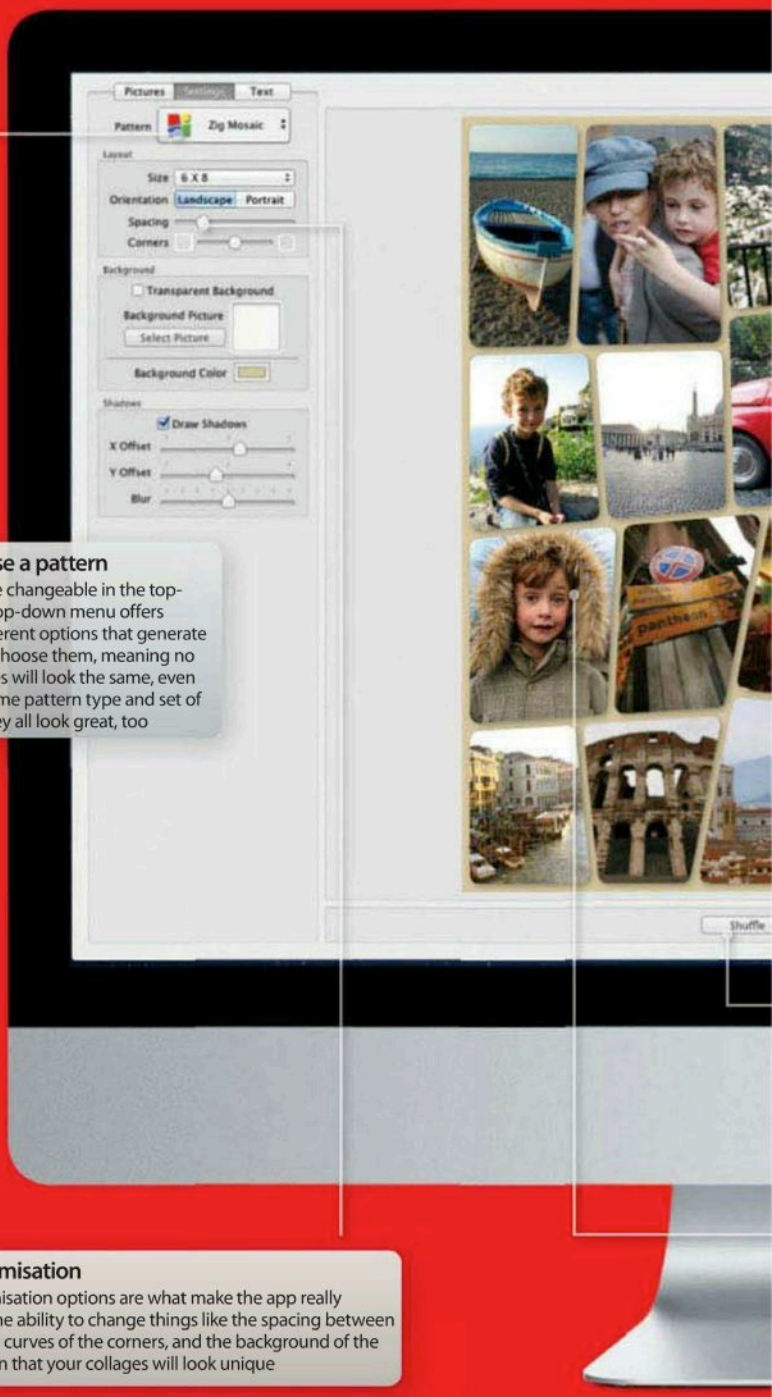
Who needs iPhoto? Create picture-perfect collages in seconds

Requirements: OS X 10.6.6
Website: turbocollage.com
Available: Mac App Store
Price: £2.99/$4.99

If you've seen the new iPhoto app for iPad and iPhone, you'll probably be aware of the new Journals feature that lets you place your snaps into an editable grid to share with your friends. This brilliant functionality isn't available on the Mac version of iPhoto, but that doesn't mean you can't still carry it out.

TurboCollage allows you to drop in a selection of photos and add them to a collage of your own design. There is a range of grid types available, and you can drag your images around, resize them, place them where you like and even add text if you like. However, it's the ability to alter smaller details, such as the amount of curve on each image's corners and the depth and blur of shadows that really make this a brilliant addition to your photo-editing app library.

The user interface keeps everything incredibly clean and simple, and the results that you can get from the app look absolutely brilliant – choosing a large image size will ensure quality is maintained.



Choose a pattern

Patterns are changeable in the top-left. The drop-down menu offers several different options that generate when you choose them, meaning no two collages will look the same, even with the same pattern type and set of photos. They all look great, too

Customisation

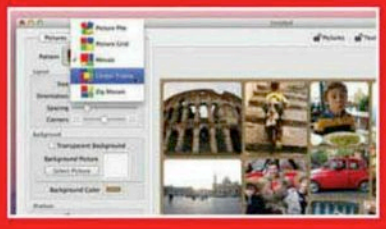
The customisation options are what make the app really fantastic. The ability to change things like the spacing between images, the curves of the corners, and the background of the image mean that your collages will look unique

Key features



1: Picture pile

The default setting places your images in a pile. You can rotate, resize and move the photos around the page to create effects.



2: Pattern menu

You can use the menu in the top-left to choose the type of collage you want to create. Each one feels really different and still looks great.



3: Sizing

Sizing options for the entire collage are available on the left of the window; you can choose everything up to poster size for high-resolution results.

WorldMags.net

"There are even settings that optimise your collage for the iPhone Retina display and an iPad screen"

Perfect and share your collage

Find out how to get the most from TurboCollage



1: Resize and move

Click on a photo and two buttons appear. One allows you to drag it around in the frame, while the other lets you resize.



2: Moving

To switch the location of two photos, click and drag the photo from one place to another. Be creative!



3: Text

You can add text to your collage from the Text tab. Alter the font and colour, then adjust the opacity to get a great effect.



4: Sharing

The app contains a Facebook sharing option that allows you to post your finished collages on your wall or timeline.



Send to friends

Just like with Journals on iOS, sharing options are available in the top-right. At the moment they're limited to just Facebook sharing, but we hope for Flickr, Twitter and more in the future. You can also email your image, or save it in a variety of formats

Shuffling

If you don't like the way your photos are laid out it's pretty easy to alter their individual placement. However, if you don't like any of the images where they are, click Shuffle randomly to spread them again. Depending on the pattern you're using this will also completely change the grid layout

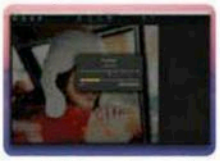
Printable

The Layout section allows you to change the size of your collage, so you can select the largest possible size to ensure a high-quality shot. There are even settings that optimise your collage for the iPhone Retina display and an iPad screen

WorldMags.net

Transform dark and flawed pics into perfect photos

Snapheal has the tools to bring out the best in your images



Difficulty: Intermediate
Time needed: 20 minutes
Available: Mac App Store
Price: £13.99/$19.99

There are plenty of editing suites available for Mac that let you create fantastic versions of your photos with a really professional outcome. Filters and effects can be added easily thanks to apps like Analogue, Snapseed and FX Photo Studio Pro, but that isn't the whole story. Some of these apps also include some simple editing tools that allow you to remove blemishes from your snaps, but they are basic compared to high-end competitors.

Snapheal, however, is incredibly powerful. It only concentrates on one aspect of photo editing – fixing your image by removing everything you don't want in there. There is a range of tools that let you do this within the app, so depending on what the issue is within your photo you'll be sure to find a tool that can help in Snapheal.

One of the app's most impressive tools is Shapeshift, which does a great job when it comes to removing items and filling the space with other aspects of the photo. For example, if you have a photo of someone on the beach and there's someone swimming in the background, you can simply drag the selection over the area you want to remove. Then you can watch as the app works its magic.

There are plenty of other correction options; you can paint areas of the screen to lighten or darken them, or even to apply effects like Blur and Saturation. For more complicated manoeuvres use the Clone and Stamp tools to copy an area and stamp it onto another to fix mistakes. If you want a powerful fixer at an affordable price, this is a fantastic choice.



Retouching

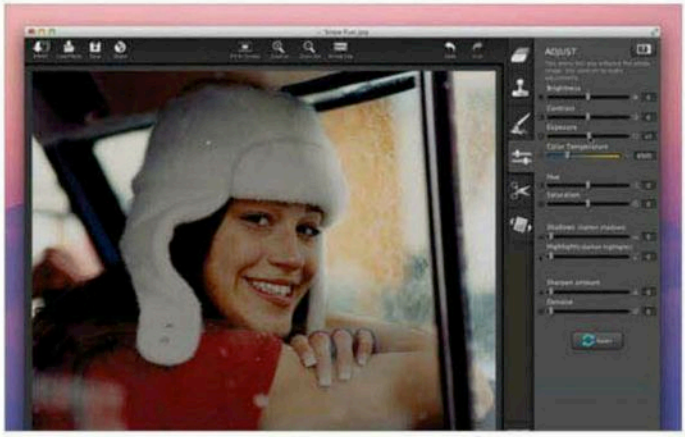
The Retouch section offers a large number of options for editing your shots. To alter settings such as Contrast and Saturation in a specific area, rather than the image as a whole, use the tools here

Knowledge base

Undo

The Undo button will undoubtedly be your friend here – correcting photos is always a case of trial and error, and thankfully Snapheal will remember everything you do while the app is open. If you zoom right in and make 20 tiny edits to a photo, then decide you don't like them when you zoom out, the Undo button will quickly remove the changes.

Step-by-step | Snapheal Lighten and fix a photo



1: Lighten it all

On the right choose the Adjust option. Increase the Exposure the most, with smaller adjustments to Brightness and Shadows. The aim is to lighten the dark area without washing out the colours in the photo.



2: Brushes

The image is better, but the face still needs more work. Choose Lighten in the Retouch section, then reduce the softness. Paint in the central area like this, then lower the brush size and increase softness to get gentle edges.

Spotlight Zooming in will help you get a huge amount of extra accuracy, as the size of your brush is set on the screen. Set the brush size to 1 and zoom right in for ultimate control.

Before and after

The tools in Snapheal are incredibly powerful; we took one photo and within a few minutes had transformed it from a dark photo with flecks of snow obscuring the subject, into a smooth, bright image that we'd be happy to print. You can see the transformation for yourself below.



Red lines

When you're marking items up with the Erase tool, these red marks denote what you are going to be removing. You can use the Deselect tool to mark areas more specifically for improved accuracy

Softness

The Softness tab allows you to get gentle edges on your image. Set the diameter to a high setting and the softness to full and you can get some really fantastic results from your edits

Comparisons

As you edit your shot, you can hit the button at the bottom and see a comparison between the original image and your edited version. This is really useful if you've removed large features from your photo



"We took one photo and within a few minutes had transformed it"



3: Eraser

Now it's time to remove the blemishes; small ones can be removed using the Wormhole option, while bigger ones will require Shapeshift. Remember that the Deselect option can be used to tighten up edges if you cross lines.



4: Smooth

We prefer natural-looking photos, but Snapheal gives you the tools to create something worthy of a glossy magazine. Zoom right in on the image and choose the Blur tool with a high Softness setting to get professional results.

Quickly clean your Mac's Desktop with Hazel

Meet Hazel, the must-have app to clear up your clutter

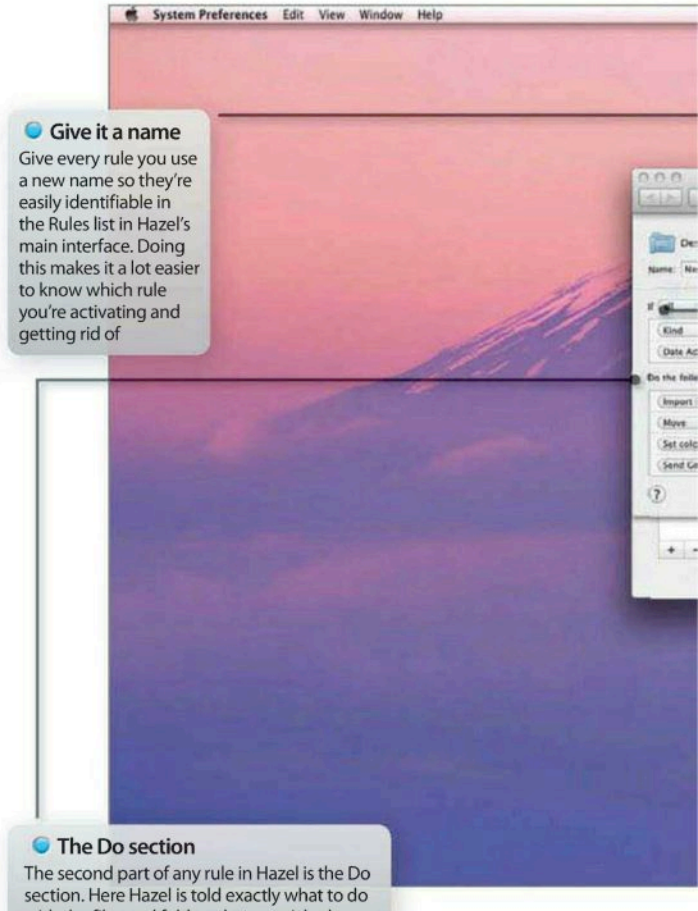


Difficulty: Intermediate
Time needed: 15 minutes
Available: www.noodlesoft.com
Price: £TBA/$25

If you use your Mac for work, play and everything in between, no matter how hard you try, your file system will become cluttered. Files, folders and mounted DMGs begin to crowd the Desktop, multimedia downloads dominate and your Mac begins to feel a bit messy. In an ideal world, we'd be able to have everything cleared for us, automatically. DMGs would be unmounted and deleted, music and movies would be added to iTunes, photos added to iPhoto and so on. Fortunately, everything we've just described is possible, thanks to Hazel.

Hazel is a fairly lightweight app that sits in your menubar and keeps on eye on all of your files and folders, periodically organising and cleaning them according to a number of rules that you set. What makes Hazel great is the rules you need to apply in order to get your Mac cleaned up work in almost exactly the same way as the ones you create for Smart Folders and Smart Albums in other parts of OS X. They're flexible too, allowing Hazel to do things like import files into iLife apps, create new folders for items based on the current date and even empty your Mac's Trash automatically.

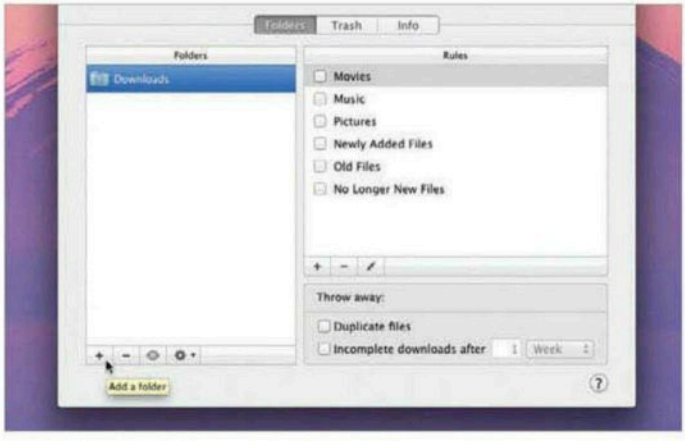
In the steps below, we'll walk you through some basic rules that will keep your Mac's Desktop clean, even during your busiest moments. If you really want to expand your horizons, though, it's well worth experimenting with rules to see what you can get Hazel to do for you. There's a few exceptions here, but this app is pretty much only limited by your ingenuity and imagination when it comes to creating rules.



Give it a name
Give every rule you use a new name so they're easily identifiable in the Rules list in Hazel's main interface. Doing this makes it a lot easier to know which rule you're activating and getting rid of

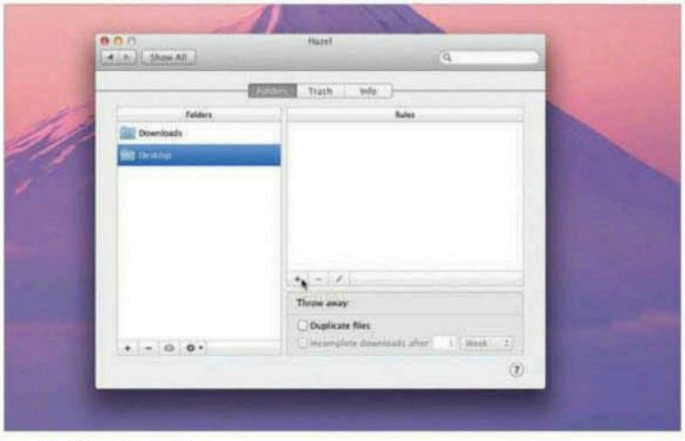
The Do section
The second part of any rule in Hazel is the Do section. Here Hazel is told exactly what to do with the files and folders that are picked up from the If section

Step-by-step | Hazel Breathe new life into your Desktop



1: Add a folder

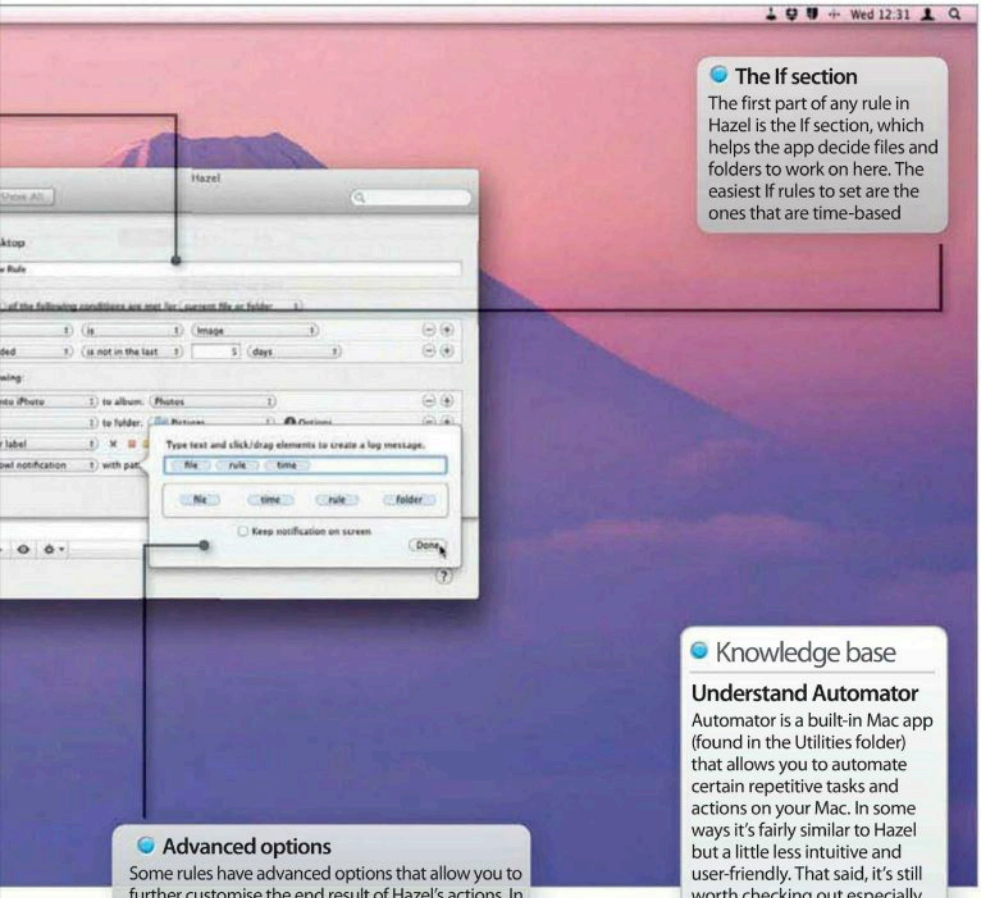
Open up Hazel's preference pane in System Preferences and, under the folder list on the left, click the plus icon to choose the Desktop folder from the file browser so Hazel knows exactly where to get to work.



2: Set the rules

Underneath the rules list on the right, click the plus icon to create a new rule that Hazel can apply when organising files and folders on your Desktop. Existing rules appear in the Rules list and are activated by their checkbox.

Spotlight If you like Hazel's automatic functionality, check out our guide to Apple's own Automator on page 82 – it's the perfect companion and easily integrated with Hazel.



The If section

The first part of any rule in Hazel is the If section, which helps the app decide files and folders to work on here. The easiest If rules to set are the ones that are time-based

Advanced options

Some rules have advanced options that allow you to further customise the end result of Hazel's actions. In this case, it's what Hazel says in a Growl notification after a certain action has been performed

Knowledge base

Understand Automator

Automator is a built-in Mac app (found in the Utilities folder) that allows you to automate certain repetitive tasks and actions on your Mac. In some ways it's fairly similar to Hazel but a little less intuitive and user-friendly. That said, it's still worth checking out especially as it can be fully integrated with Hazel's rules in a few clicks.

Making new rules in Hazel

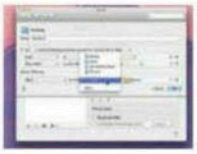
Hazel's rules are the way it decides how files and folders are selected and treated once the app is in control. Below, we've listed a few different actions Hazel can perform with your files and folders and how they can work for you to give your Mac a much-needed spring-clean.



1 Most recently, Hazel has gained the ability to import certain file types into iPhoto, iTunes and Aperture, making it hugely useful for stray photos and MP3s.

2 Instead of chucking a bunch of files into one folder, Hazel can sort them into sub-folders and name those based on details, such as file creation dates.

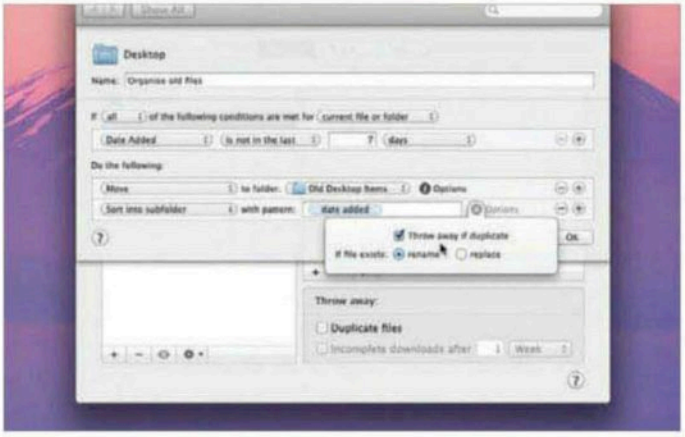




3 Hazel can move files to the Trash, which is highly useful for DMG files that have been lying around long after you have installed the apps they contain.

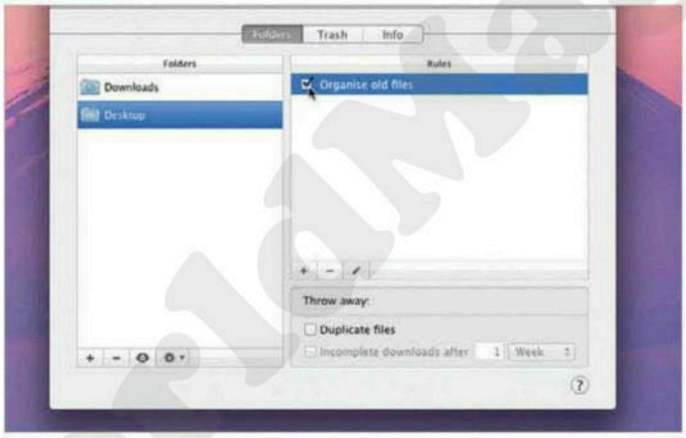
4 Apple's very own Automator app is fully integrated into Hazel, allowing you even more options for sorting your files if you know how to use the app properly.





3: Set the details

To add a new rule, you'll first have to set what conditions are used to find files (in this example, those older than seven days) and then what's done with them (in this case, moved to folders and sorted by date).



4: Set it in motion

When you've finished editing your rule, hit Okay. It should then appear in the Rules list. To set it in motion and let Hazel act upon it, you'll need to click on the checkbox next to the rule name.

Remove duplicate files using Gemini: The Duplicate Finder

Clean up your Mac with this system-wide duplicate finder



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 25 minutes
Available: Mac App Store
Price: £5.49/$7.99

A system clean-up is the perfect way to get a sluggish Mac working back up to its optimum performance level, and using this app is one of the quickest and easiest ways to do it. Gemini: The Duplicate Finder is an intelligent and beautifully designed duplicate finding app that uses a unique rapid scanning algorithm to scan your Mac for duplicated files quickly and easily.

Drag-and-drop support means that you can scan through particular folders instantly and one-click automatic selection allows you to delete the duplicated files immediately, eliminating the need for arduous file screening. Built-in previews of categorised duplicates help to define which files can be removed and the app will save one copy.

If you need to clear out space on your system quickly, the enhanced scanning algorithm allows the app to search for the biggest duplicates first so that you can stop the scan and instantly free up significant amounts of space if needed. Gemini can even find folders which have identical content.

For a quick, one-click system clean-up, this app is a good investment and will have your Mac streamlined in a flash. Follow the simple steps to find out loads more.



Sort
List your duplicated files according to size, name, type or count by using this drop-down menu

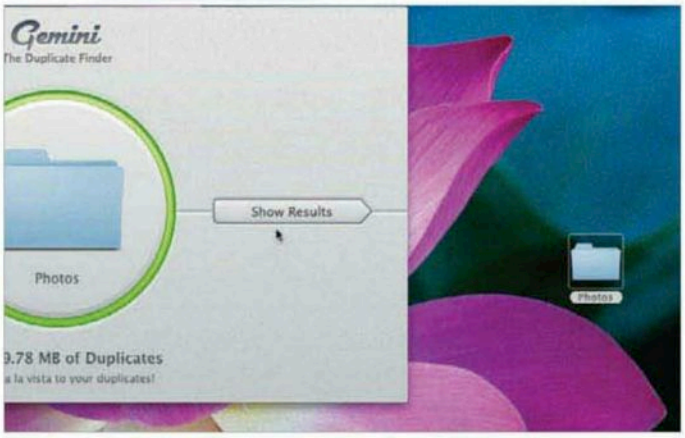
Categories
The colour-coded pie chart categorises your duplicated files in a visually rich, cohesive way that makes it easy to view the worst offending folders

Step-by-step | Gemini Scan folders for duplicate files



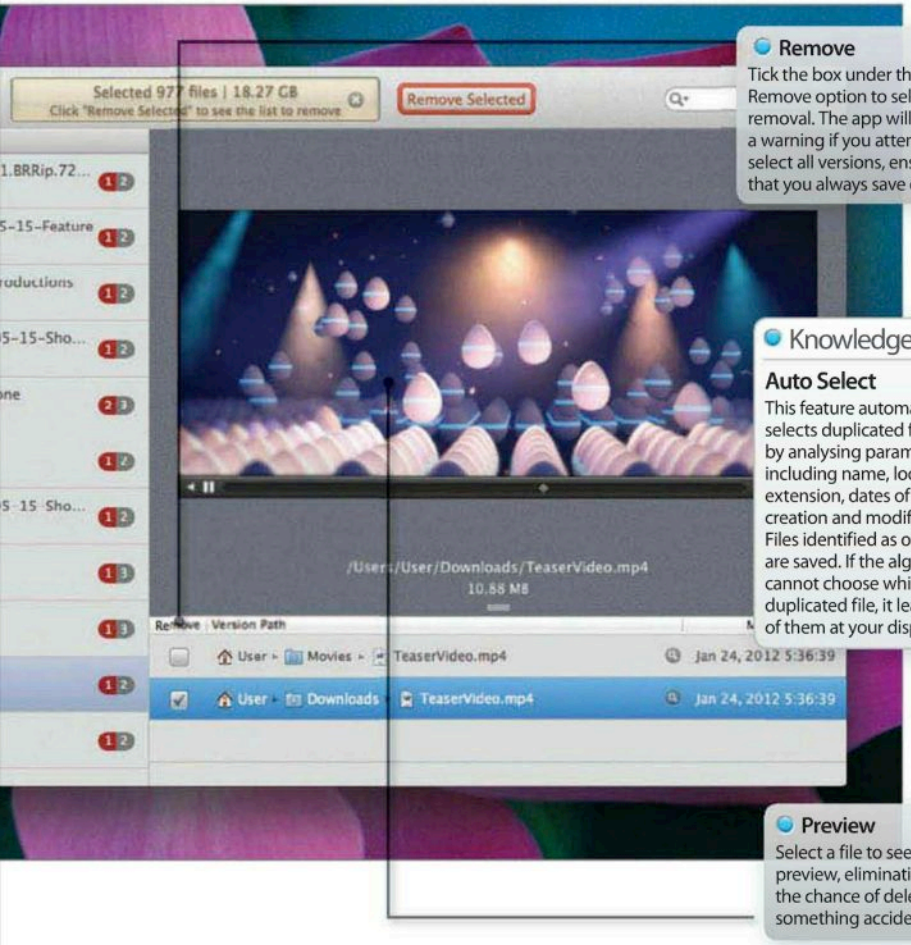
1: Add or Drop Folders

Start scanning by either clicking the '+' icon on the left of the panel or by dragging a folder on top of the big arrow. You can also select a folder by using the Scan drop-down menu at the top of the interface.



2: Select and scan

Choose a folder to scan and tap the Scan button in the bottom-right. The app will scan the folder for duplicates. If none are found it gives you the option to start a new scan. If there are duplicates, click on Show Results.



Remove
Tick the box under the Remove option to select it for removal. The app will flash up a warning if you attempt to select all versions, ensuring that you always save one

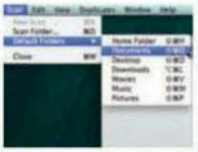
Knowledge base

Auto Select
This feature automatically selects duplicated files by analysing parameters including name, location, extension, dates of creation and modification. Files identified as originals are saved. If the algorithm cannot choose which is the duplicated file, it leaves all of them at your disposal.

Preview
Select a file to see the preview, eliminating the chance of deleting something accidentally

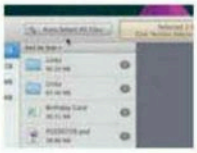
Streamline your system

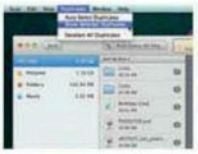
Once you've found your way around the Gemini: The Duplicate Finder interface, you'll be able to make use of its features by using these extra tips and tricks. We'll show you how to maximise your efficiency and create a streamlined system in no time…



1 Use the Scan drop-down menu at the top of the interface to select a particular folder or select a specific one from the Default Folders option if you need to.

2 To free up space on your Mac immediately, simply tap Auto Select All Files for removal. Only do this if you're confident that all duplicates can be removed.

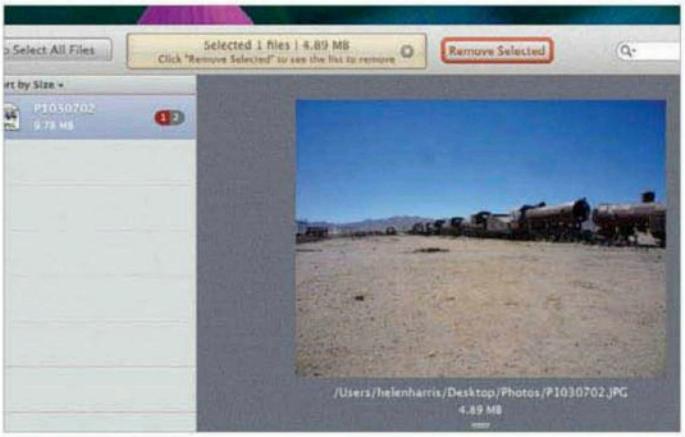




3 Use the Duplicates drop-down menu at the top of the interface to select Show Selected Duplicates. This brings up the shredder for instant file removal.

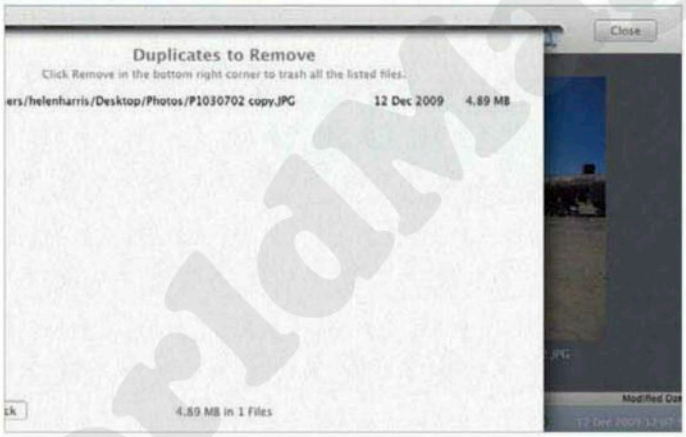
4 When you're within the shredder interface, you can remove files from the list of documents to be removed by tapping the small cross to the left of the file.





3: Results

The duplicated files are listed down the left-hand side. Click on one to see the file in the right-hand panel and tick the box underneath of the version to be deleted. Tap the red Remove Selected button at the top of the interface.



4: Duplicates to Remove

A brilliant shredder interface appears with a list of the files to be removed. Tap the Put All Back button on the bottom-left of the interface to keep the files, or delete them by tapping the red Remove button in the bottom-right.

BECOME A MAC GENIUS

Learn amazing shortcuts to master your Mac today

The beauty of OS X's interface is that it's incredibly streamlined, and has been built to make everything as simple as possible. However, to make things even easier, Apple has included a huge number of shortcuts into the operating system that make even the simplest tasks faster and easier.

With a couple of taps on your keyboard you can do everything from empty your Trash to shut down your computer. You won't need to fiddle around with menus or click multiple times with the mouse – just a few timely taps and your job will be complete.

Of course, you don't have to use all of the shortcuts listed in the next few pages; try them all out and work out which ones you will use most. Concentrate on learning these first, before moving on to some others that are a little different. If you need a quick reference guide, our special CD includes a brilliant poster for you to print off and stick on your pinboard. Some will impress your friends and family, others will just speed up your work; either way, you'll feel like an Apple Genius.

"You won't need to fiddle around with menus… just a few timely taps and your job will be complete"



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Shift
Normally used to access the second function of a key press

Function
Enables function keys like F1 at the top of the keyboard

Control
Most often combined with others for advanced app control

Command
Referred to as the Apple key, this one is a shortcut professional

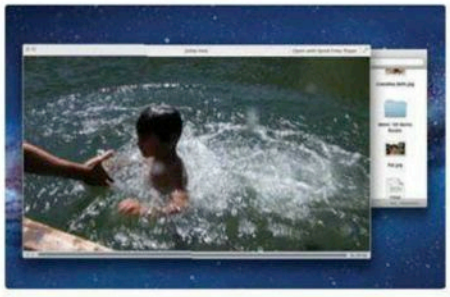
Option/Alt
Another key that is most often used to complement others

F1 - F12
Individual apps utilise the function keys for various tasks

Quick Look

Undoubtedly one of the most useful features of OS X, Quick Look lets you see the contents of a file with a tap of the Spacebar. You can read documents, flick through photos and even watch movies with this tool.

⌘ + Y or Space





Adjust volume without sound effect

Tired of hearing the 'pop' of the volume buttons whenever you turn your Mac up or down? Hold down Shift and the sound will silently increase. You will still see a prompt on screen, but there will be no sound. You can turn the 'pops' off completely in the Sound area of System Preferences.

⇧ + 🔉 or 🔊

Screenshot a single window

There are screenshots, then there's this function. Rather than taking a full-screen grab, or selecting the area to grab with your mouse, use this combination and a camera will appear. Place it over any aspect of OS X (anything from the Dock to an app window) and click to grab a brilliant cut-out screenshot.



⌘ + ⇧ + 4 + Space

General shortcuts

Some shortcuts are so simple and effective, you'll be kicking yourself for not using them sooner…

Move to Trash
⌘ + ⌫

Empty Trash
⌘ + ⇧ + ⌫

New Finder window
⌘ + N

New folder
⌘ + ⇧ + N



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Finder tricks



Go back
⌘ + [

Go forward
⌘ +]

Close current window
⌘ + W

Quit application
⌘ + Q

Minimise window
⌘ + M

Copy
⌘ + C

Cut
⌘ + X

Paste
⌘ + V

Undo
⌘ + Z

Redo
⌘ + ⇧ + Z

Show Dock item in Finder
⌘ + ↖

Cycle app windows
⌘ + `

Close all windows
⌘ + ⌥ + W

Take control of your apps

This is a particularly useful command if you need to quickly flick between two or three applications, or to check whether a certain app is open. The grey box that appears on the screen during this shortcut will remain for as long as you keep the Cmd button held down, allowing you to perform actions with other keys, or switch applications with your mouse.



Cycle through apps
⌘ + ⇥

Quit selected app
⌘ + ⇥ + Q

Cycle back through apps
⌘ + ⇥ + `



New folder with selected items

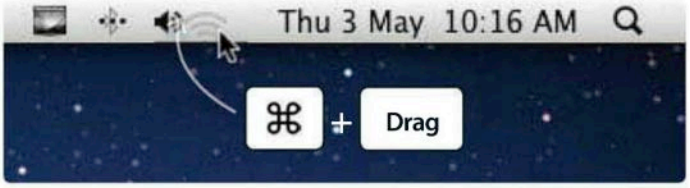
If you've just clicked save on a bunch of photos and forgotten to place them in a folder, this command will help. Select all the items that you want to group, then hit the command. The files will jump into a folder that is immediately ready to rename and move around the screen.

⌘ + ^ + N

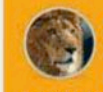
"To move them, hold down Cmd then click and drag the menulets around"

Move menulets in the menubar

Menulets sit in the top-right corner of the screen and help with things such as Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, as well as external apps. To move them, hold down Cmd then click and drag the menulets around, or drag them from the menu bar to remove them completely.



System

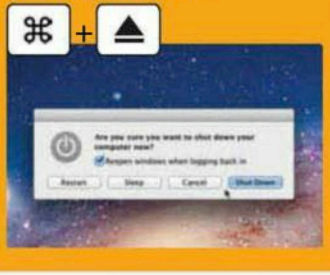


Some of the fundamental actions you complete every day on your Mac can be sped up by a simple shortcut, as you are about to find out. Nothing will make you look more like a Mac genius than the ability to quickly command your machine without heading to the mouse or trackpad. We recommend that you memorise these straight away – they are killer shortcuts. Don't get keyboard-happy and action them by mistake though, it could be costly!

Show Shut Down dialog

If you want a choice of what to do on shut down, this is a brilliant option. Tap these keys and you'll have options to Sleep, Restart and Shut Down. To Sleep or Restart you press S or R, and to Shut Down, hit Enter.

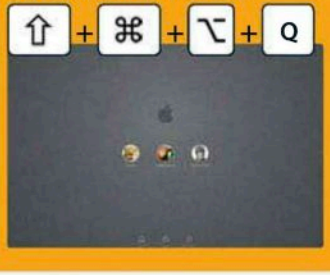
⌘ + ⏏



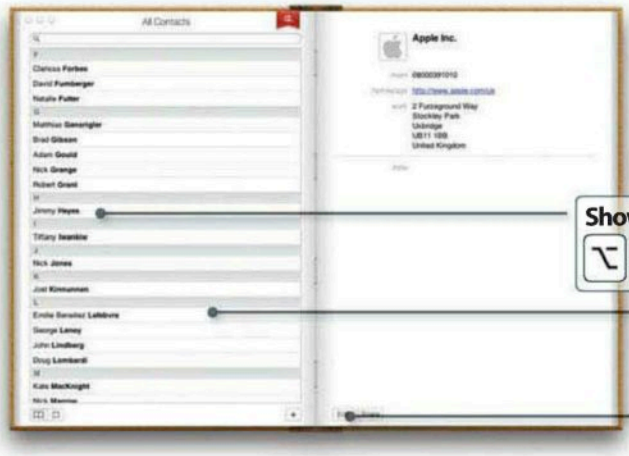
Log out immediately

If you have multiple users and don't want to leave someone else's workspace running in the background, this key command will quickly log you out without asking for any confirmation whatsoever.

⇧ + ⌘ + ⌥ + Q



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Address Book tips

Using the Address Book can be time-consuming if you need to add a lot of contacts or find people quickly. With these shortcuts you'll be able to navigate through your contacts much more easily than with a mouse.

Show last imports
⌥ + ⌘ + L

Edit Card
⌘ + L

Go to Previous Card
⌘ + [

Go to Next Card
⌘ +]

Tame iCal today

iCal can be a very useful tool, and one that many people use several times a day. If you've never tried it before, open it up now and play with these shortcuts to see just how easy the whole application can be.

Jump to Day
⌘ + 1

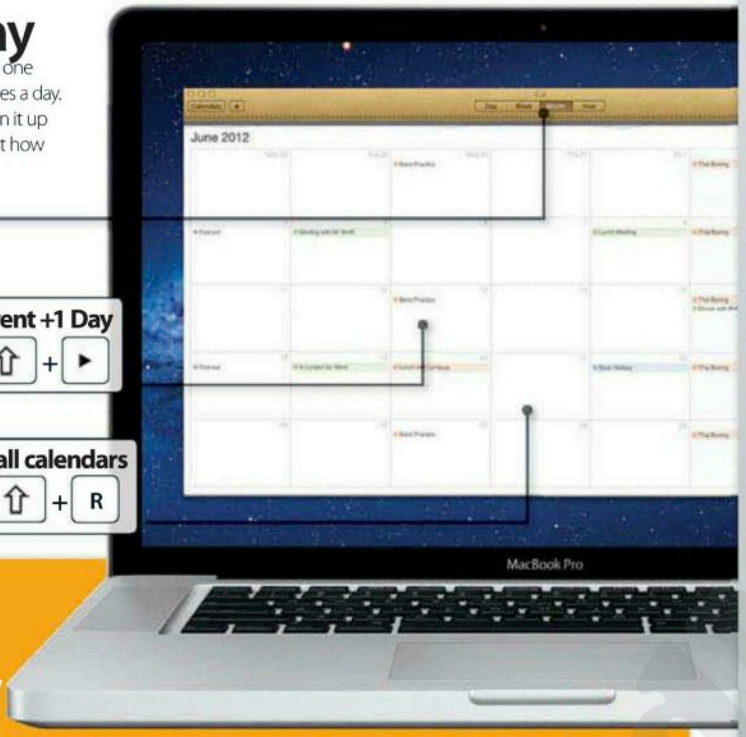
Jump to Week
⌘ + 2

Jump to Month
⌘ + 3

Jump to Year
⌘ + 4

Move Event +1 Day
^ + ⇧ + ▶

Refresh all calendars
⌘ + ⇧ + R



"Your Mac will log out automatically"

Instant Shut Down
This one can be incredibly useful as a way to skip any confirmations of whether or not you really want to shut down. It's also the source of a rather nasty trick that you can play on your friends.

^ + ⌥ + ⌘ + ⏏

Close all and restart
If you've just installed a new application that requires a restart but didn't want to do it right away, this is a quick way of finishing the installation and getting back to what you were doing beforehand.

^ + ⌘ + ⏏

Log out window
Tap these and rather than logging out immediately, you'll be presented with a confirmation window. Leave it for a minute and your Mac will log out automatically. Useful if you want to log out without Lion's Resume tool.

⇧ + ⌘ + Q

Everyday help

Spotlight search
⌘ + Space

Take full screenshot
⌘ + ⇧ + 3

Select area to screenshot
⌘ + ⇧ + 4

Rename selected file
Return / ↵

Application Preferences
⌘ + ,

Show view options
⌘ + J

Force quit apps
⌘ + ⌥ + esc

Show or hide the Dock
⌘ + ⌥ + D

Eject disk
⌘ + E

Force eject CD on startup
⏏ + F12 / 🖱



Change Quit to Force Quit
🖱 + ⌥

Get Info
⌘ + I

Reset PRAM and NVRAM
⌘ + ⌥ + P + R

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Top 15 iLife shortcuts

You can make your use of the iLife apps much more intuitive with shortcuts, too. They're really easy to learn and like all the others, once you've got them memorised you'll wonder how on earth you ever lived without them.

Safari

You can use a lot of the general shortcuts in Safari, but here are a few exclusive extras that will help you browse more easily…

Home

⇧ + ⌘ + H

Open Downloads list

⌥ + ⌘ + L

Move to next tab

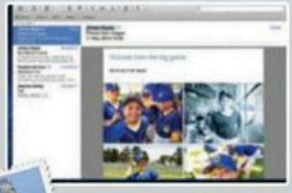
⇧ + ⌘ + ▶

Move to previous tab

⇧ + ⌘ + ◀

Move cursor to Address Bar

⌘ + L



Mail

Mail is all about typing out messages, so these shortcuts will help you keep your hands on the keyboard for faster messaging.

Go to Inbox

⌘ + 1

Go to Sent

⌘ + 4

Attach file

⇧ + ⌘ + A

Reply to Mail

⌘ + R

Get New Mail

⇧ + ⌘ + N

iPhoto

iPhoto can be a pain to navigate at times so these shortcuts will save you valuable seconds and stop you from overworking your mouse.

Drag image when zoomed

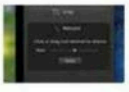
⌘ + Drag

Compare edit with original

⇧

Retouch photo

T (While in Edit mode)



Fix Red Eye in photo

R (While in Edit mode)

View full image/100%/200%

0 / 1 / 2



iMovie

Editing movies can be a little tricky if you have to keep darting off to the menubar every couple of seconds. These tips will keep you productive.

Project properties

⌘ + J

Play selected Event/Project

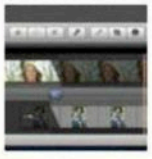
\

Play in full screen mode

⌘ + G

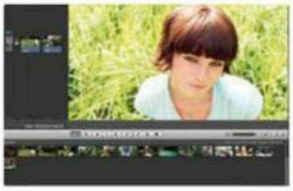
Open Precision Editor

⌘ + /



Open Music

⌘ + 1



GarageBand

If you memorise enough GarageBand shortcuts you may never need to use your mouse or trackpad again. Here are our favourite five…

Go to the beginning

Return / Z

Mute/unmute track(s)

M

Split selected track(s)

⌘ + T

Start or stop recording

R

Print Notation

⌘ + P



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Mouse and Dock

The Dock offers all kinds of shortcuts that you can access with a click

"Whether you want to check what's currently playing, or switch on features like Shuffle, it's all available"

Compose messages

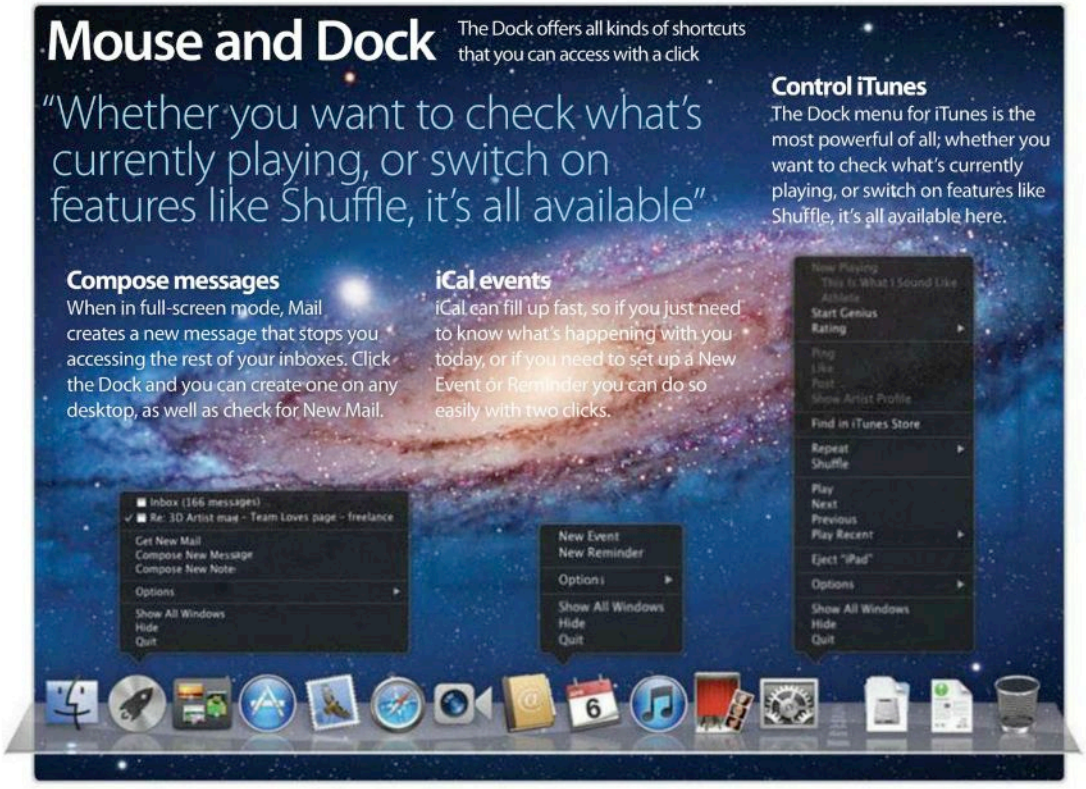
When in full-screen mode, Mail creates a new message that stops you accessing the rest of your inboxes. Click the Dock and you can create one on any desktop, as well as check for New Mail.

iCal events

iCal can fill up fast, so if you just need to know what's happening with you today, or if you need to set up a New Event or Reminder you can do so easily with two clicks.

Control iTunes

The Dock menu for iTunes is the most powerful of all; whether you want to check what's currently playing, or switch on features like Shuffle, it's all available here.



Step-by-step | Add your own shortcuts



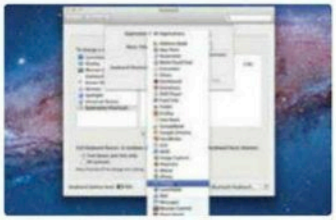
1: Keyboard options

Open System Preferences and choose Keyboard. In this pane you can see all of the Shortcuts available in OS X.



2: Add a shortcut

At the bottom of the list, choose Application Shortcuts. This lets you add a new shortcut to an app or OS X.



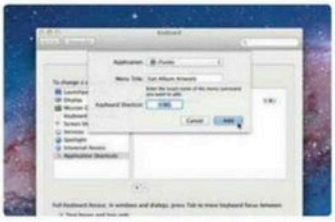
3: Applications

Now you can choose which application your shortcut will apply to, or choose All Applications at the top of the list.



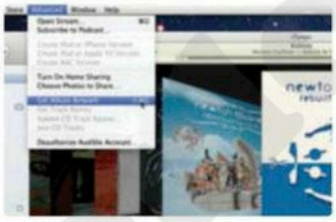
4: Find the command

Look through the drop-down menus at the top, Get Album Artwork doesn't have one, so let's add one now.



5: Pay attention

In System Preferences type in the name of the menu command you want. Then, choose the shortcut and hit Add.



6: Check it works

Open the app you added a shortcut to and click in the menu option you chose. The shortcut will now appear.

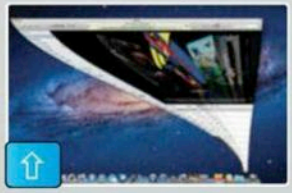
Just for fun

These shortcuts may not be that useful, but they're sure to wow your friends or confuse people you want to trick!



Colours to negative

Tapping these keys reverses the colours on your screen and is a great way to give your eyes a rest in darker surroundings.



Slow motion actions

Originally added as a way for Steve Jobs to show off during the announcement of his beloved Mac OS X, this feature remains.



Look up words

Hover the mouse pointer over a word in one of Apple's native applications and tap these keys to have a pop-up dictionary appear.



Zoom in/out

Scroll in with the Magic Mouse or Magic Trackpad and the screen should follow your mouse's pointer around.

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Get started with the Mac App Store

The Mac App Store is your hub for new software. Here's how to get your hands on amazing apps

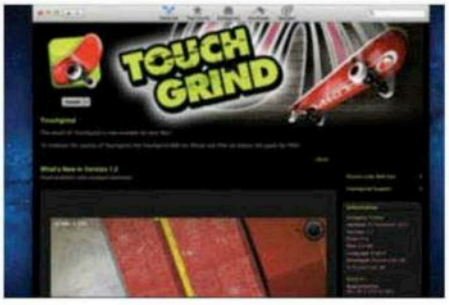


Difficulty: Beginner

Time needed: 10 minutes

When it launched at the start of last year, the Mac App Store offered Mac users an entirely new way to browse and download apps that had never been seen before. There was widespread shock at Apple's decision to do this as it was based on the success of the iPhone App Store and not guaranteed to work on the Mac platform. As has been the case for many a year now, Apple was right and the Mac App Store became an instant success.

Now, over a year later, a lot of people take the Store for granted, while others don't even know it exists and have never even opened it up. If this is you, you're missing out on a huge amount of incredible content. In this tutorial we'll start you at the basic level. If you have an Apple ID, which you would use to buy iPhone and iPad apps as well as songs and movies in the iTunes Store, you can use that to log in. If not, we'll show you where you need to go to set one up.



Step-by-step | OS X Get started with the Mac App Store



1: Apple ID

Open the Mac App Store, look at the Quick Links bar on the right. Click Sign In. Input your Apple ID and password here, or create one if you don't have one.



2: Categories

Below the Sign In button you will see a drop-down box that says All Categories. Click it and you can quickly navigate between categories in the Store.



3: Chart topping

Along the top of the Store are five options. The second one is Top Charts; select this and you can see what is being downloaded the most.



4: Well paid

The opening page of the Top Charts section shows you the most downloaded apps. When you find an app you're interested in, click its name or icon.



5: App details

Clicking on an app's name will take you to its page. You can read a description here. Click More to reveal all the information on the app.



6: Screenshots

Scroll down and you can flick through screenshots of the app, just like on the iOS App Store. This gives you a better idea of how the app will work.

Spotlight If you have an iTunes gift card, you can also use it to buy apps in the Mac App Store. Click Redeem under the Quick Links bar and you can input your code to credit your account.

Mac App Store interface explained

Discover a world of great software

Quick buy
If you know you want an app, you don't have to view the app's page before you download. These grey buttons act as 'Buy' buttons, so you can click these and download apps from this page

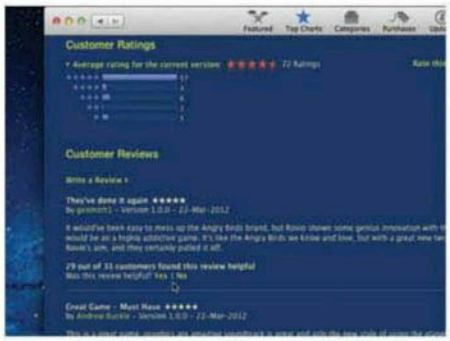
Past purchases
The Mac App Store recognises when you buy something with an Apple ID. You can click the Purchases tab at the top to view all of your previously downloaded apps

Knowledge base
Don't have the Store?
It might be that you don't see the Mac App Store anywhere on your machine. If you are running OS X Lion, the Store will be included automatically in your operating system. However, before Lion, the Store was only available on OS X 10.6.6, the final version of Leopard. Earlier systems don't support the Store, and Leopard users will need to download it from Apple's website.

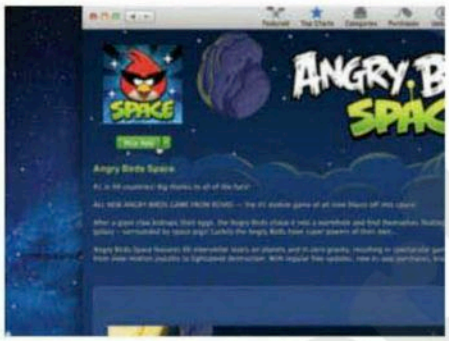


Up to date
When one of your apps needs updating to a newer version, the Mac App Store will show an alert in your Dock. Click it and choose Updates from the top of the window and you can download the latest version of the app

Search and download
If you know exactly what you're looking for and need to find it fast, you can use the Search bar in the top-right of the window. This will offer suggestions of apps as you type, so you can find things instantly



7: Tough crowd
Move further down and you can read reviews from other users. These offer brilliant and real opinions on the app, away from the marketing blurb.



8: Ready to buy
If you want the app, at the top of the page click the Buy App button. It will turn green, click it again, and input your Apple ID and password.



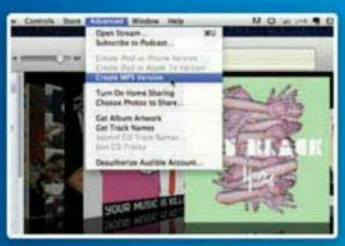
9: Installed
Once you've clicked Buy App, the Mac's Launchpad will open automatically and your app will appear on the grid. You can now click it to launch it.

10 amazing iTunes secrets

iTunes is much more than just a digital jukebox, as we find out…

iTunes has come a long way over the last decade. From its beginnings as a modest music librarian it has gradually taken on more and more responsibilities, blossoming into the multimedia monolith we know it as today. As well as a repository for your entire CD and DVD collection and a shop front for music, videos, movies, TV shows and iPhone and iPad apps, it also moonlights as an internet radio and a maintenance tool for iDevices, not to mention an additional sideline in social networking.

One side effect of its current versatility is an increase in complexity to the point where many of its more useful features are relatively unknown, or hidden behind obscure menu items. From keyboard commands for little-known functions to things that you didn't even know it did at all, iTunes's latest incarnation is hiding more than its fair share of secrets. Here we turn the spotlight on just a select few.



1 Create MP3 Version

This under-used file converter has become very useful to music-making types for converting WAV and AIFF files exported from other apps to the smaller MP3 format for emailing 'work in progress' mixes. This menu item does in fact adjust to the format currently selected under the Import Settings panel of iTunes's Preferences.

2 Reveal selected file

Ever wanted to find exactly where the MP3 file for a song is located on your hard drive? Just select a track and hit Command+Shift+R (for reveal) and a Finder window will open up with the selected track highlighted for you. There's also a menu command for this feature located in iTunes's File menu.



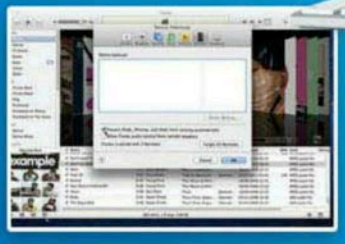


3 Keep track of media counts

When you plug an iDevice into iTunes, a useful bar graph appears beneath the main window, displaying how much of your device's storage is taken up by your media. Click on the legend and the units on the graph change to reflect the number of individual items contained, and the time they'll take to play through.

4 Prevent automatic sync

If you want to charge a friend's iPhone, how do you stop it from syncing automatically? Either go to Preferences>Devices and uncheck Prevent iPods, iPhones and iPads from syncing automatically, or hold down Option+Cmd keys as you connect, releasing the keys after the device has appeared in iTunes.



Get the right view

There are a number of viewing options in iTunes, including cover flow, where you can see all of your album art and quickly view it

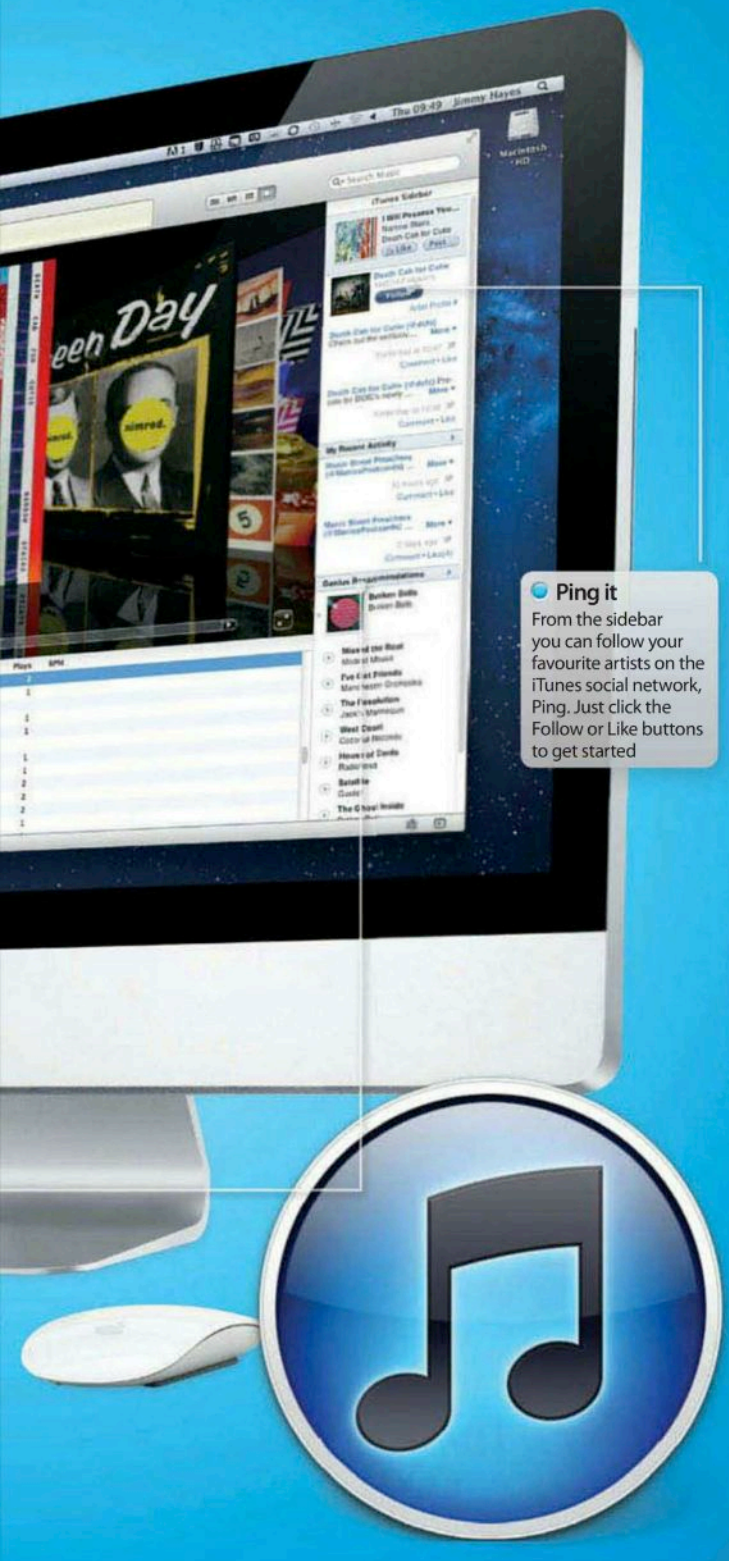


Get more music

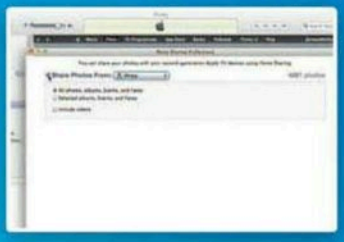
iTunes is so clever that it will recommend new music based on what you are already listening to. Here on the right you can click on and buy music in a matter of seconds

"Select a track and hit Command+Shift+R and a Finder window will open up"

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Ping it
From the sidebar you can follow your favourite artists on the iTunes social network, Ping. Just click the Follow or Like buttons to get started



5 Share photos with a 2nd-generation Apple TV

Even though it lacks the hard drive its predecessor had, the latest Apple TV can still be used to display your iPhoto Library on your TV via iTunes. To enable, select the Choose Photos to Share item from the Advanced menu and pick the Events, Albums, Photos or Faces you want shared.

6 1080p video downloads

New in iTunes 10.6 is support for downloading 1080p HD video from the iTunes Store. However, the default setting is to download 720p, presumably to minimise download times. To change this, head to Preferences, and under the Store tab set 'When downloading High Definition videos, prefer:' to 1080p.



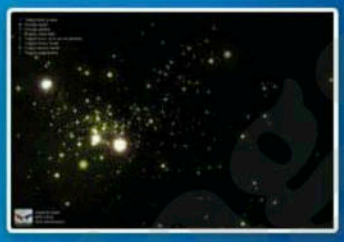


7 The column browser

With list, album, grid or cover flow view available, you might think that there are enough ways to view your library. But, hidden in iTunes's View menu is another way to list your content. Select View>Show Column Browser to open up a new column in the main window to list your tunes by artist, album, composer or genre.

8 Adjust visualizer settings

The iTunes visualizer can be summoned with the Cmd+T shortcut, but pressing the '?' key while it's running brings up a list of options to control the effects. You can change the camera mode, display the track info, and adjust various other options. Plus, if you want, you can also run it without playing any music.





9 Error correct CDs while importing to iTunes

Well-loved CDs can often get scratched or otherwise contain errors. With a few minutes added to the import time, ticking the Use error correct when reading Audio CDs box in Preferences>General>Import Settings will hopefully enable you to enjoy your favourite albums once again.

10 Swot up with iTunes U

An invaluable resource for students and educators, iTunes U opens up a world of knowledge from revered academic institutions. Virtually cruise the hallowed halls of Stanford and Oxford, and download free course lectures in everything from Business Studies to Science, all from the iTunes U tab in the iTunes Store.



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Control your Mac with Automator tasks

Get to grips with Automator – the built-in OS X app that makes your Mac work for you

As far as apps go, Automator is the unsung hero of your Mac. In fact, it might well be the unknown hero if you haven't ventured into that ominous-looking Utilities panel in your Applications folder. Essentially a task scheduling and automation app, Automator allows you to schedule regular, automatic tasks that do everything from playing music when you boot up your Mac to cleaning out your Downloads folder.

In short, Automator makes your Mac work for you and it's a lot more useful than you'd think. To make Automator work its magic, you'll need to create workflows, which tell it where to get files and folders and what to do with them. Creating them is incredibly easy and we've listed four of our favourite workflows opposite (we've even included them on the free **iCreate** disk for you to download).

The workflow
In order to make Automator work its magic, you'll need to drag different actions into the workflow on the right. Workflows can be edited, saved and shared to make Automator work in any way you need it to

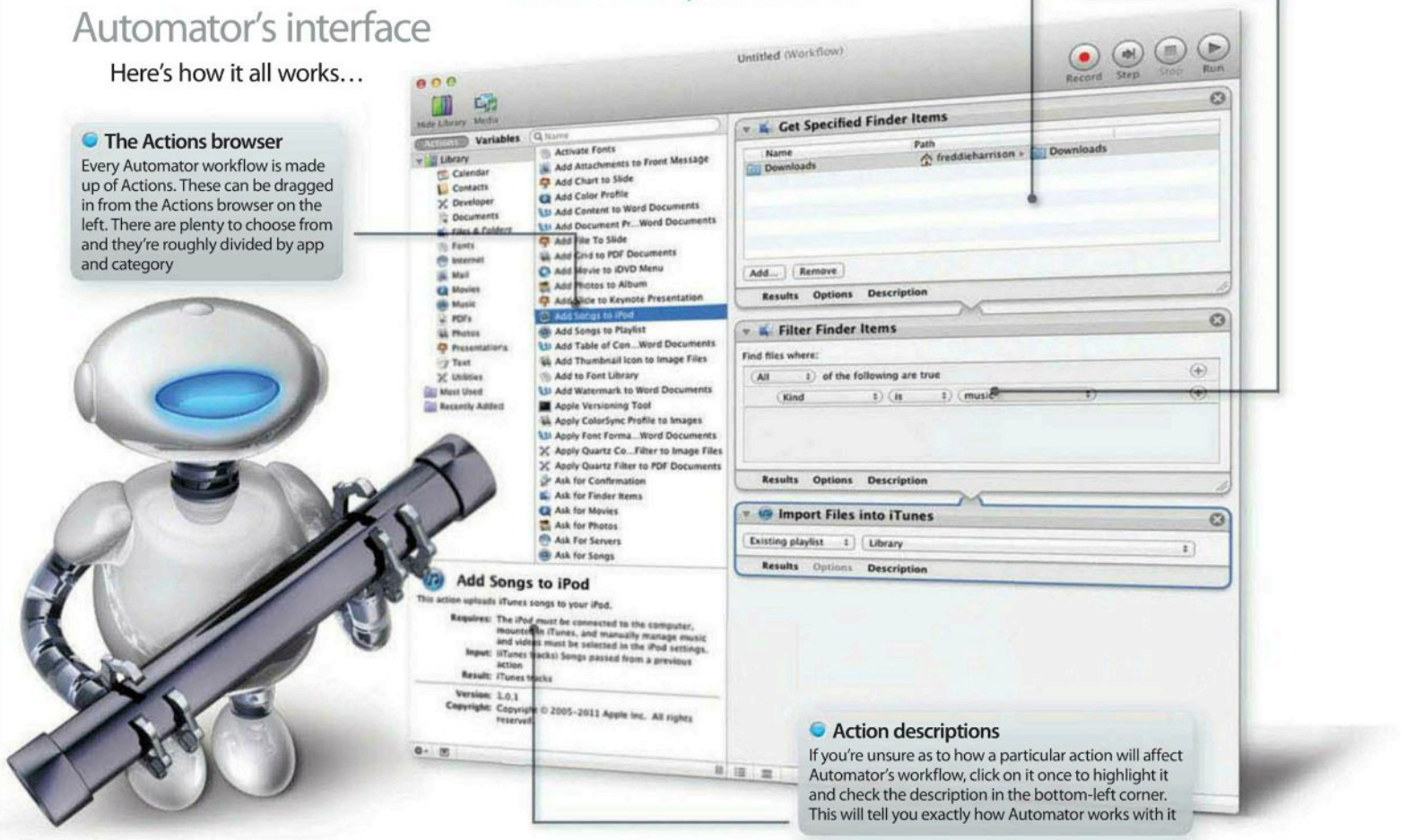
Extra options
Depending on the action you're using in Automator's workflow, it may require a few extra options in order to work. Setting these could drastically change exactly what Automator does when it's working

"Automator makes your Mac work for you and it's a lot more useful than you'd think"

Automator's interface

Here's how it all works…

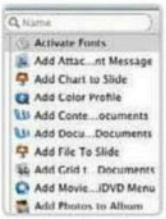
The Actions browser
Every Automator workflow is made up of Actions. These can be dragged in from the Actions browser on the left. There are plenty to choose from and they're roughly divided by app and category



Action descriptions
If you're unsure as to how a particular action will affect Automator's workflow, click on it once to highlight it and check the description in the bottom-left corner. This will tell you exactly how Automator works with it

Spotlight We've included a few more examples of Automator workflows on the disc to get you started. 'Print documents' is a service that needs to be made on your Mac.

Step-by-step | Automator Create your first workflow



1 Choose a type

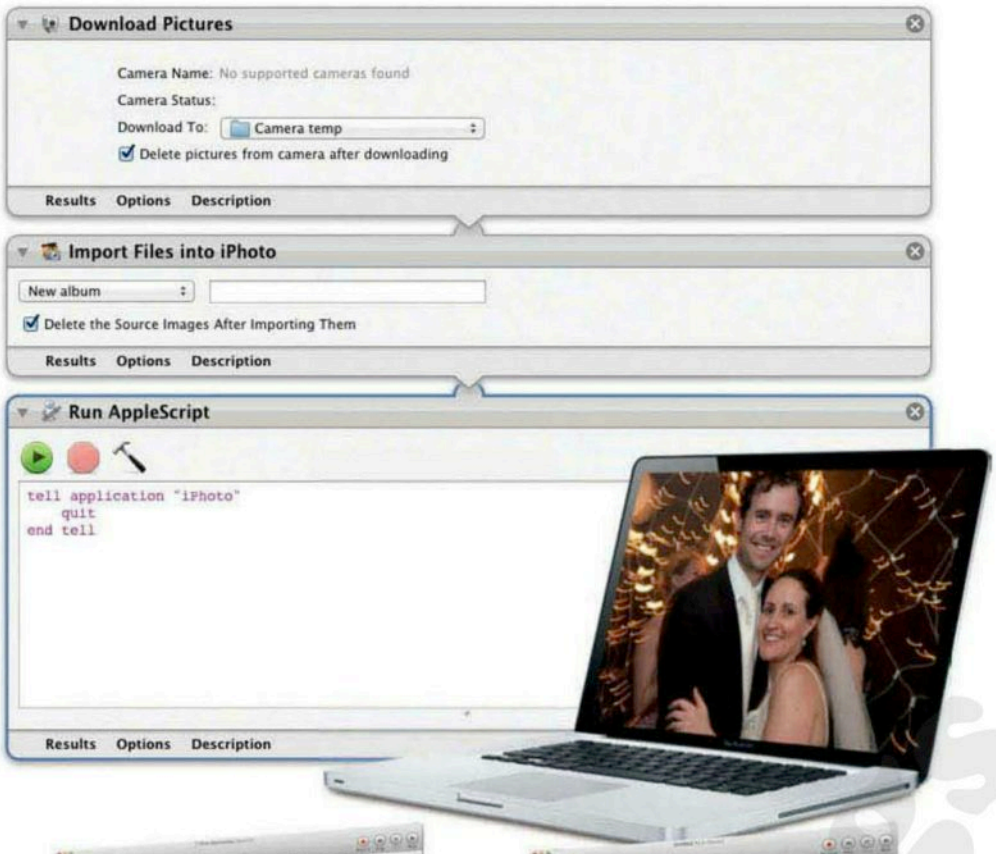
Automator workflows come in many forms; this one is an application that's activated by image capture. The first part of the workflow downloads images to a certain folder.

2 Drag in the commands

Keep building up your workflow by dragging in different commands from the sidebar. In this example the second part imports the images into an iPhoto album.

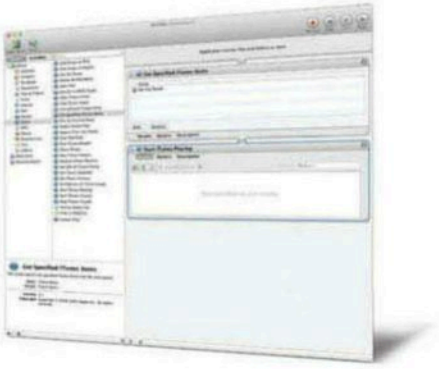
3 Quit and finish it

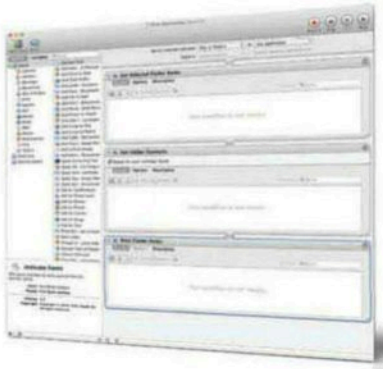
The final part of this automator workflow includes an AppleScript that tells iPhoto to quit once the photos have been imported. You'll need to write this yourself.

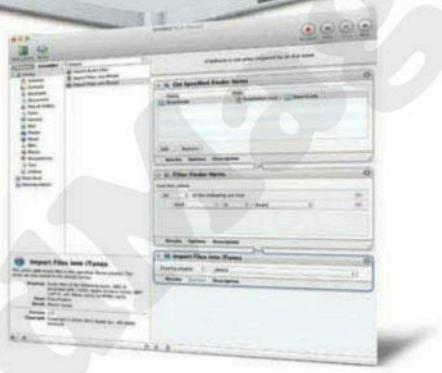


"You can print a whole folder's worth of documents in just a couple of clicks"

Example workflows







Play your favourite iTunes playlist every time you turn on your Mac

If you need a bit of help getting up in the morning, then this handy workflow will set Automator to pick out your favourite morning playlist and press play on iTunes without you even touching your Mac. You'll need to add the workflow to your Mac's startup items in System Preferences to get it working perfectly.

Print multiple documents without opening any app

Printing documents is a pain when you haven't already got the document's default app open. With this workflow, you can print a whole folder's worth of documents in just a couple of clicks. Better still, you don't need to open any of the apps. It all happens in less than a few seconds, making all the difference to your workflow.

Auto-import new music into iTunes from your Downloads folder

If you're the kind of person who downloads a lot of music from outside of iTunes, you'll know how annoying it is when your Downloads folder gets clogged up with files. This workflow is triggered by an iCal event to check your Downloads folder for new music every other day, import it into iTunes and delete the files.

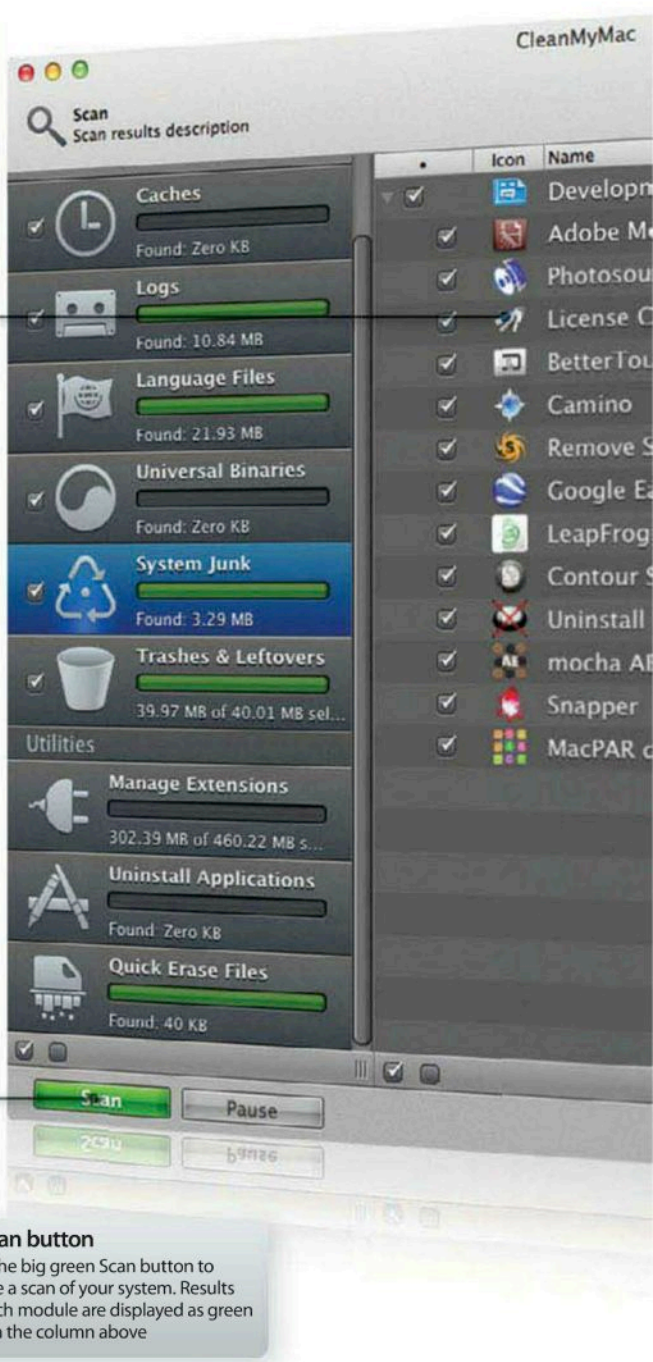
CleanMyMac's hidden features

Find out just how helpful this house-keeping OS X app can be

In the face of having to deal with multiple backups from our iDevices, software installs and downloads of music and movies from the iTunes Store, our hard drives are struggling more and more to cope with the seemingly insatiable demand for gigabytes that everyday computing life demands. Coupled with the recommendation that you should never let your Mac's drive fill up to the point where there is less than ten per cent of its overall capacity free to store temporary files, a shortage of hard disk space can become a problem sooner than you think.

This is where a utility app such as CleanMyMac can save the day, by scanning your drive for unused and unnecessary files and removing them at the click of a button. Here we take the lid off this useful system add-on and examine ten ways in which it could dramatically improve your shrinking storage issues.

Main window
The main window displays the results of each scan. Click on a module on the left and the candidates for elimination from that category are displayed here for you to view



Scan button
Click the big green Scan button to initiate a scan of your system. Results for each module are displayed as green bars in the column above



1 Clean up Caches

Ironically, cache files that are originally intended to make software run faster, by storing information for faster retrieval, can often build up and have the reverse effect. CleanMyMac's Caches module scans your drive for these and displays potential candidates for removal so that you can pick and choose which ones to delete.

2 Delete Logs

Log files are records of an app's activity and can be useful for tracking down a particular process that might be causing a problem. Most users will have no need for them though, so if CleanMyMac reports that a large number of log files have accumulated and are hogging a sizeable portion of your drive, it's usually safe to remove them.





3 Purge Language Files

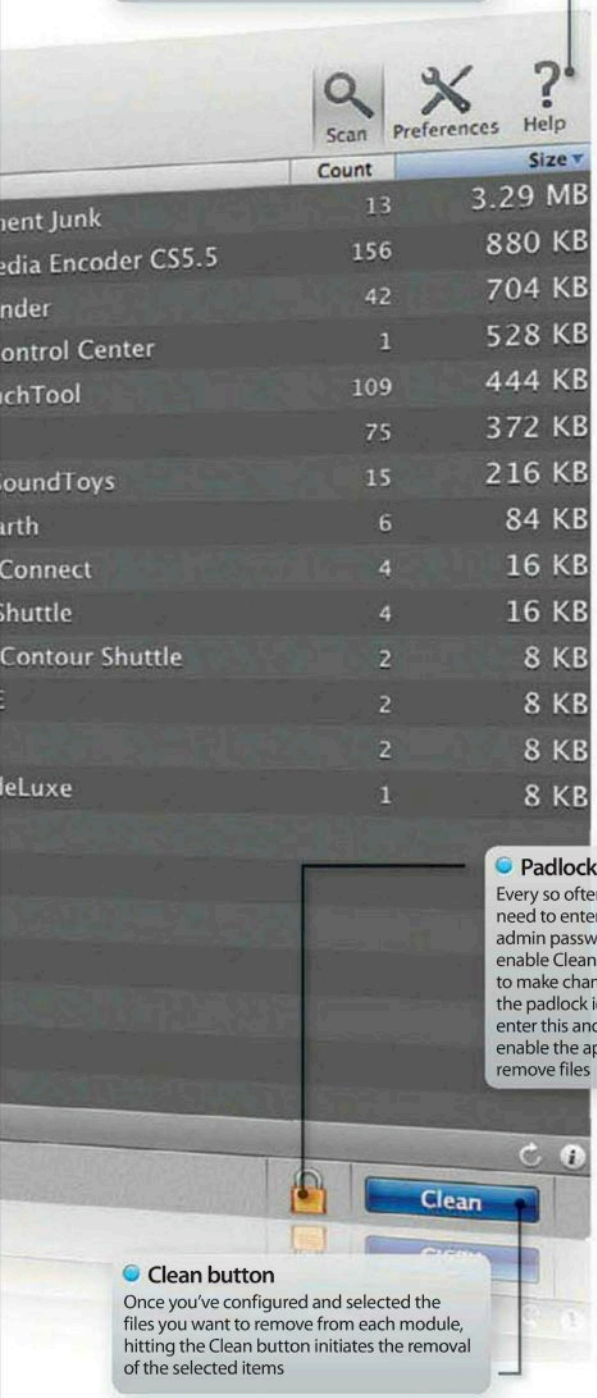
OS X offers support for more than a dozen languages so that machines can be configured to the user's requirements regardless of nationality, but most Mac users will only require one operating language, and very few will need more than two. Getting rid of unwanted language files is another useful way to reclaim disk space.

4 Remove Universal Binaries

Universal binaries are versions of apps containing code that enables them to work on both Power PC and Intel systems, designed to ease the transition to the new chips in 2006. Six years on, there is likely to be much less of a need for these, as most users are now on Intel systems. CleanMyMac can detect and remove these codes.



Help system
Clicking the Help button launches a comprehensive and easy-to-use on board help system with links to CleanMyMac's PDF manual and the support area of the website



Padlock
Every so often you'll need to enter your admin password to enable CleanMyMac to make changes. Click the padlock icon to enter this and thereby enable the app to remove files

Clean button
Once you've configured and selected the files you want to remove from each module, hitting the Clean button initiates the removal of the selected items



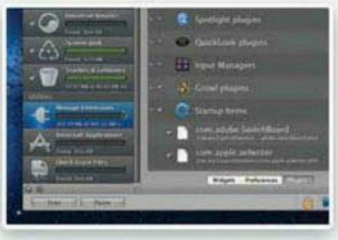
5 Jettison System Junk

Many applications include redundant files that are only used for debugging purposes, and so for day-to-day purposes can be safely removed without any detrimental effect to your system. The System Junk sweep also picks up things like .DS_Store files and .Spotlight-V100 folders. It's another useful weapon in the fight for space.

6 Empty Trashes & Leftovers

A typical app install can leave many small associated files, other than the app itself, on your system. Simply dragging an unwanted app to the Trash can leave these files behind, so CleanMyMac's Trashes and Leftovers scan picks these up, which can include unused help files and will also highlight deleted photos in iPhoto's Trash folder.



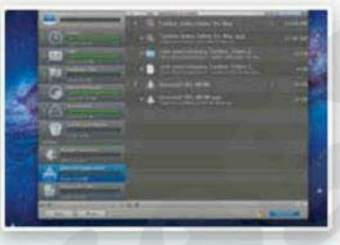


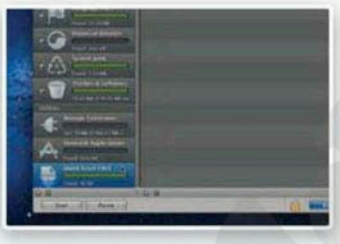
7 Manage Extensions

The Manage Extensions module allows you to remove any unwanted widgets, plug-in or preference pane easily. Clicking the triangle to the left of an application's name reveals a list of all its related plug-ins. Removing one is as simple as checking the box next to its name and clicking the Uninstall button.

8 Uninstall Applications

As already mentioned, uninstalling an app simply by dragging it to the Trash leaves files and junk behind. By using CleanMyMac's Uninstall Applications tool, you can ensure that every file associated with the unwanted app is also removed. To use it, just drag the target application to the window, and its cronies will also be rounded up.



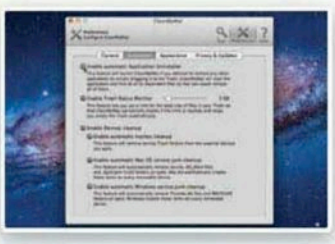


9 Quick Erase Files

If you're stuck with a file that you can't get rid of, this function lets you quickly and securely erase files that Finder won't otherwise let you remove by the normal method. Just drag the target file into the window, tick the Use Secure Erase box and the deleted file will be overwritten three times to ensure that it can't be recovered.

10 Automatic uninstall

Ticking the Enable automatic Application Uninstaller box in CleanMyMac's Preferences pane will launch CleanMyMac if you attempt to uninstall an application by dragging and dropping it to the Trash. This will ensure that you remove not just the unwanted application, but also all the pesky files that go with it.



Tweak Finder's settings

Use Finder's Preferences to enhance your file browsing



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 5 minutes

Without realising it, you probably use Finder more than you do Safari or any other app on your Mac – it's the lifeblood of OS X and ensures you're never more than a few clicks or keystrokes away from your apps, documents, music or movies. Finder might be the kind of app that you use without even noticing, but that doesn't mean that a few simple tweaks can't make it even easier to use and more effective as a staple of your OS X toolkit. Here's a few tweaks that are well worth taking a look at if you want to speed up your searches and organise your files with ease using Finder on your Mac – try them out, they could well change the way you use this app forever.

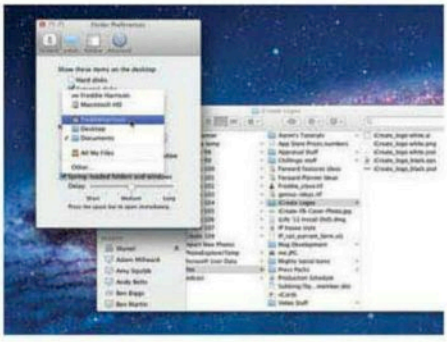


Step-by-step | Finder Master Preferences for a better app



1: State your preference

Under Finder in the menubar, click on Preferences or use the Command+'comma' keyboard shortcut to bring up Finder's Preferences window and start work.



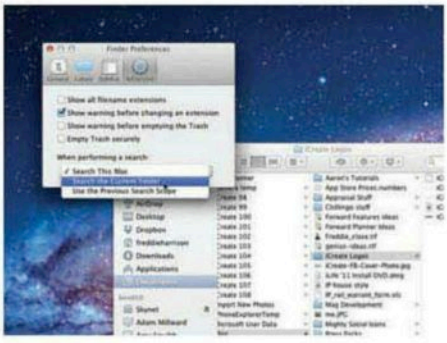
2: Select your start point

Under the General tab, click on the drop-down menu under 'New Finder windows open' to choose Finder's default starting point when you start searching.



3: Clean your sidebar

If Finder's sidebar is looking a little cluttered you can remove some of the unused shortcuts by unchecking them in list under the Sidebar tab.



4: Start off a search

Under the Advanced tab, use the drop-down menu at the bottom to select where Finder's search function looks first – Current Folder is usually best.

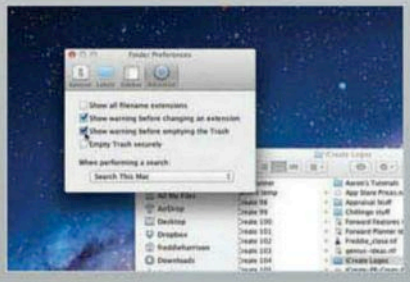
Clean your Desktop

Finder's Preferences don't just control what's in a window, they also affect what's on your Desktop. Here's a few settings to tweak



1 Hide your hard drives

Under the General tab, tick or untick the checkboxes near the top to choose which connected drives or devices are shown on your Desktop. You don't always need to see them all!



2 Empty the Trash

To keep your Desktop even tidier, make emptying the Trash a little quicker by losing the warning dialog that appears every time.

Mobile documents made easy.





When you are out of the office, work doesn't stop. Taking your work on the road is easy with today's lightweight and powerful laptops, multitasking smartphones and tablet devices… but what about all those files and the paperwork on your desk? With **Fujitsu's ScanSnap Scanner solutions** you can easily scan all your documents and have access to them wherever you are and on any device; Office PC, notebook, and now on your iPad® or iPhone® thanks to the ScanSnap Connect App and in the cloud with Google Docs, SalesForce CRM, SugarSync, Evernote and more. Make your documents as mobile as you are – with just the press of one button!

Have a look at
www.ScanSnapit.com/icreate2

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Genius Bar
Your questions answered

We all have system glitches from time-to-time – fortunately our resident expert is here to answer all your Mac, iPhone and iPad-related questions

Contact us today
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Twitter: @icreatemagazine
Web: iCreatemagazine.com
Email: icreate@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Team tips

Here's a selection of useful tips & tricks



Jimmy Hayes
The one thing I always do is number my files. Its sounds silly but its the best way to avoid default alphabetical ordering and means I can choose the hierarchy of a folder system and it makes finding things much, much easier.



Stephen Ashby
I hate it when it files like photos are called things like 'IMG1020'. I don't know much about Automator, but I worked out how to quickly rename batches of images to things like Holiday 1, Holiday 2 and so on.



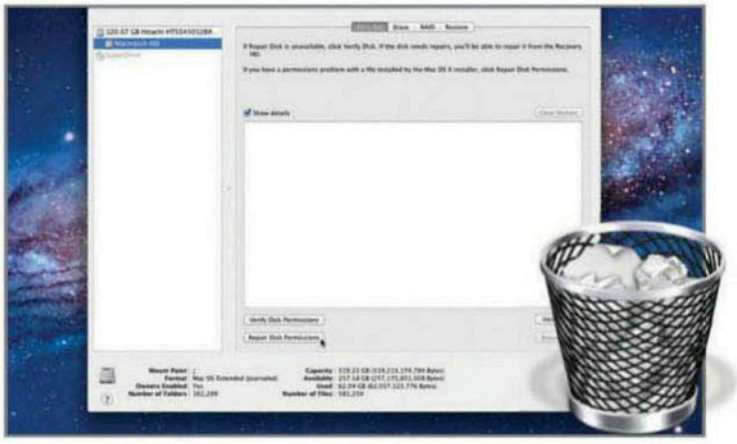
Freddie Harrison
I recently set up an iCal-triggered Automator task that clears out my chat logs that are saved by the new Messages beta. It's a lot easier to configure than you might think. It's really surprising how chat logs can build up.

Trash can troubles



Ever since I upgraded to OS X Lion, I've had issues with my Mac's Trash. When I try to drag anything into the Trash can, I get prompted to enter my administrator password. When I do this I appear to lose all of the files. What's going on here? Is there any way I can fix this?
Peter Jamieson

It sounds like that your update to OS X Lion has thrown your disk permissions out a bit, with your Mac now failing to remember that your user account has sufficient permissions to add items to the Trash and delete them. There are a few ways to go about fixing this, but the most successful (and easiest) appears to be through heading into Applications>Utilities>Disk Utility and repairing Disk Permissions. It won't take long to do, and once you've done this, you shouldn't see the password prompt again. As for your missing files, have a look for the .Trash folder and see if they've ended up there. If you can't find this folder, it's because it's set to be invisible. Take a look on the Apple Support Communities forum where there will be an all-important Terminal command that you can input to make these invisible files and folders visible. Otherwise try using a handy Spotlight search to look for the files that are currently missing.



Repairing Disk Permissions could be the key to solving issues with deleting files

Moving my libraries



My iPhoto Library is getting really large, but I have a lot of time invested in organising my library (Faces, Events, Places etc). Is it possible to move my iPhoto Library to an external hard drive and still be able to use all of the functionality on my iMac?
Michael Vaughn

Moving your iPhoto Library to an external drive shouldn't affect its organisation. Simply find the library package in your Pictures folder, copy this on to your external hard drive, then launch iPhoto while holding the Alt key, and hit Choose Library when the dialog box appears to find and add it again. It's that easy.

The key to a successful iPhoto Library transfer is re-loading it into iPhoto



"Moving your iPhoto Library to an external drive shouldn't affect its organisation"

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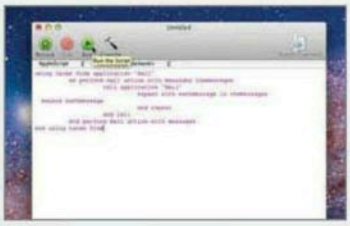
Give me my bounce back



I hope you can point me in the right direction. After upgrading my Mac to OS X 10.7 Lion, my Mail app appears to be missing something called 'Bounce' that allows you to return and delete any unwanted emails.

Mark Williamson

If you've upgraded from Snow Leopard to Lion (new machine's have Lion pre-installed) then you're in luck, Mark. Head over to: **www.discussions.apple.com/thread/3201744** to find how to restore this functionality using AppleScript and Automator. We've detailed the process below.



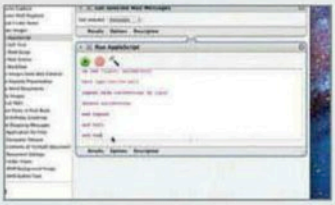
A simple AppleScript implementation can bring back bounce to Lion's Mail app

Step-by-step | Mail Bring back Mail's Bounce

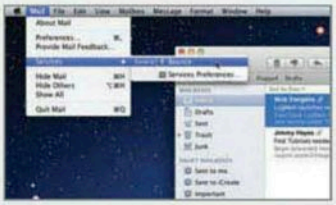
1 Open Automator and create a new service from the menu. Save this and name it as 'Bounce' so you can access it in Mail.



2 Using the instructions found on the Apple Support Communities link, set up the Automator workflow and copy in the AppleScript.



3 To test your bounce service, send an email to yourself, select it in Mail's Inbox and choose the 'Bounce' script from your services in Finder.



Sharing the Wi-Fi



I have an older Power PC-based G5 iMac and need to connect it to the internet. I can't really connect it to my router via Ethernet, so I need to find another way of going about this and getting everything working. I wondered if I could connect to the internet through my MacBook Pro? It's fairly up to date and I've heard that it could be a possible solution. How would I go about doing this?

Rob Humphrys

We're going to make a few assumptions about your current setup and Macs here, Rob, so hopefully this solution will apply and work for you. Firstly, we'll assume that your G5 iMac has a working AirPort card and is able to connect to Wi-Fi. We'll also assume that your MacBook Pro is running either OS X 10.6 or OS X 10.7 and is connected to your router. The best solution here is to create an ad-hoc Wi-Fi network from your MacBook Pro to share your internet connection wirelessly with your G5 iMac. We've detailed the process in the sidebar on the right. Be aware that your ad-hoc network won't be set up with a password. Fortunately, this is easily fixed by heading in to the Wi-Fi Options window and creating one to stop others using the connection. If things don't work to start with, make sure Web Sharing (System Preferences>Sharing) is turned on.

> "The best solution here is to create an ad-hoc Wi-Fi network"

Set up an ad-hoc network to share your internet connection wirelessly





Create an ad-hoc network

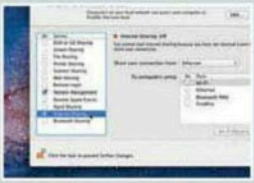
Sharing pane

Head into System Preferences and hit the Sharing pane. You may have to select this from the View menu if you can't find it.



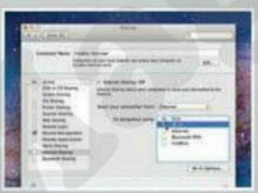
Find the option

Under the list of sharing options in the bottom-left of the window, choose Internet Sharing. This should currently be unticked.



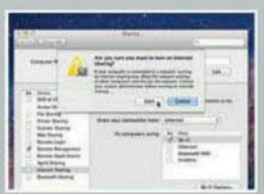
Connection

Opposite the sharing options, you'll need to choose where you share your connection from (Ethernet) and how you're going to share it (Wi-Fi).



Ready to go?

When you're happy to go, head back over to the sharing options and check the box next to Internet Sharing, then hit Start on the warning dialog.



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iOS holiday packing list

Bring some backup

It's definitely worth investing in a portable backup battery for your devices if you can. Very useful on a long-haul flight!



Keep it safe

Invest in a decent case for any device you decide to take abroad. It's bound to be prone to a few bumps in transit. A case could save the day.



DIY Wi-Fi

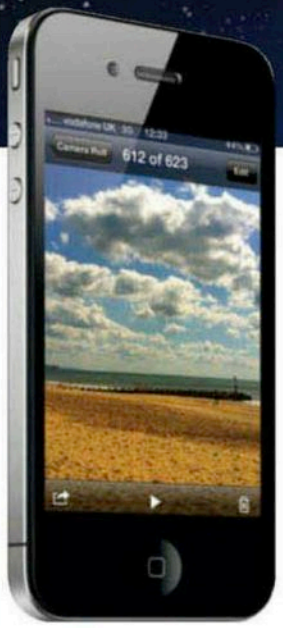
If you're worried about lack of Wi-Fi access, why not create your own? Create a personal hotspot or invest in Three's MiFi device, which works in a very similar way.



Know your limits

When abroad, calls, texts and data charges can be much higher. Most providers now offer apps to help you keep track of your usage and costs.

What you've got left this month:	
Internet (MBs)	704
3 to 3 Minutes	4,939
Texts	4,860
Picture Mail	150
Voice minutes	375



An iOS holiday?

I'm about to go on holiday to Spain and I want to take my iPhone and iPad. Mainly to keep in contact with friends and family while I'm away, but also to entertain my kids! Is there anything I should know regarding data charges for 3G and different voltages for chargers etc?

Linda Williams

Rather than just reel off the same warnings about watching out for hefty roaming charges and remembering to pack EU plug adapters, we thought we'd go one better and draw up our very own iOS holiday packing list! We're more than experienced in taking our devices away with us, so we're pretty sure there are a fair few tips that can help you get the best, cost-effective results. Above all though, avoid trying to mix them with sand and water at all costs. It sounds obvious, but it will save plenty of hassle. If you do, however, turn over and check our handy 'repair and replace' guide on what to do if the worst should happen.

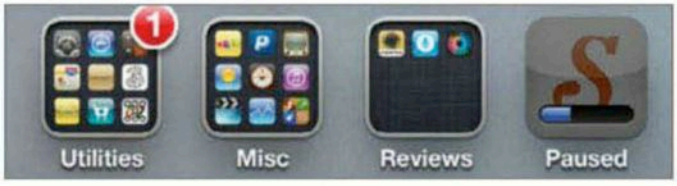
"We thought we'd go one better and draw up our very own iOS holiday packing list!"

My apps won't install!

I've been trying to install an app onto my iPhone for a few hours now, but it appears to have frozen halfway through downloading. I've tried turning my Wi-Fi on and off but that's made no difference. Do you have any other ideas as to how I can get this download kick-started again? I don't want it to be stuck forever!

Robert Harris

Sometimes pausing and un-pausing a download can give it a kick-start if it gets stuck



There are a couple of things you can try. First of all, try tapping the icon to pause and un-pause the download. If this doesn't work, it might well be worth plugging your iPhone into the computer and manually removing the app from the Apps list in iTunes. This should fix things.

Photo Stream foes

I'm really happy with Apple's iCloud service overall, but there is one thing that bugs me – Photo Stream. It seems to me that once a photo is in there, it can't ever be deleted, and while that might be fine for some, it isn't too useful when your kids take a lot of photos of the floor by accident. I don't really want to reset Photo Stream, but I don't need these photos. What can I do?

Brian Green

From what you've said, we're guessing you haven't yet upgraded to iOS 5.1. In which case, we'd definitely recommend you do so as it'll send you well on your way to sorting your issue! The iOS 5.1 update included the ability to individually delete photos on Photo Stream. All you need to do is bring up Photo Stream in your Photos app, tap the share icon in the top-right corner, tap the photos that you want to get rid of, and then hit Delete. It's that easy!

Managing your Photo Stream is much easier thanks to the iOS 5.1 update



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I can't stand these icons

This might seem like a bit of a strange question, but one of my favourite iPhone apps has recently changed its icon to one I really don't like. Beyond that, it's hard for me to tell the difference between that and another app as they both look too similar. Is there any way to revert to the old one? I don't want to jailbreak my device.
Robin Bryant

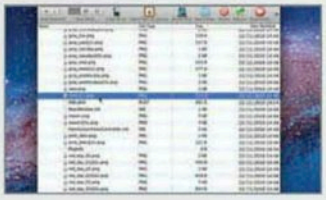
Yes, there is, as long as it's a third-party app. You'll need to download iExplorer (free, **macroplant.com**) – a third-party app for Mac or PC that allows you to access certain files. Follow our guide below…



Step-by-step | Replace third-party icons



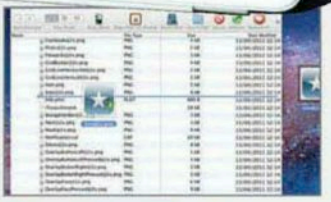
1 Head over to **www.macroplant.com** and grab the iExplorer app. It's free, lightweight and available for both Mac and PC.



2 Plug in your iPhone and fire up iExplorer. Head into the Applications folder, then the app name, and then search for its icon.



3 Find the icon you'd like to revert to, ensure it's the right size as the current icon in use and that it also has exactly the same file name.



4 Now drag your new icon into iExplorer to overwrite the current icon. You may need to restart your iPhone to see changes.

iPhoto on older iPads?

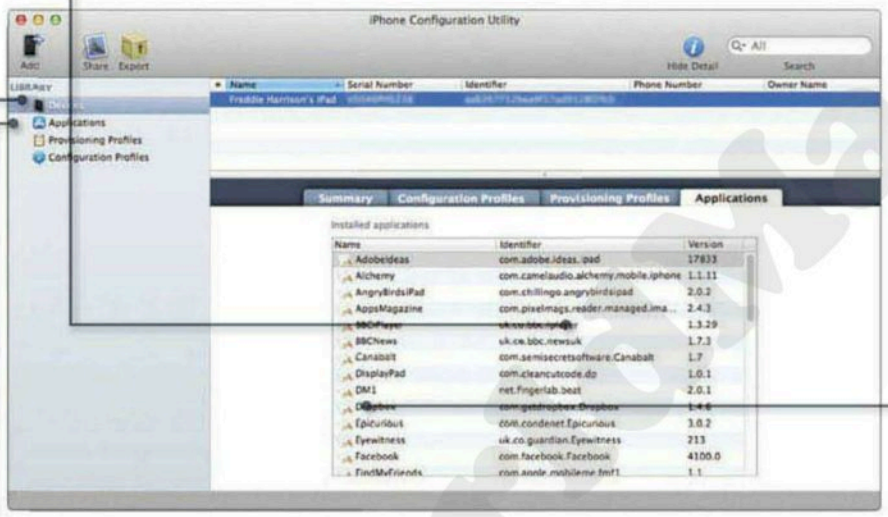
I'm a little disappointed that Apple will not allow the iPhoto app to run on the original iPad, purely because it doesn't have a camera. Surely, people still edit their photos on devices without cameras? This seems a bit silly to me.
Francis Harley

If you're desperate to run iPhoto on the original iPad, it can be done. It's not official and it may not work forever, but it is possible to 'sideload' the app on to your device using Apple's old iPhone Configuration Utility. Download this and check out our guide below…

1. Plug in your iPad
Plug in your iPad and head back to the Window section from the sidebar. Your iPad's name should appear in the list near the top.

2. The apps list
The apps list contains every app you've downloaded via iTunes on your Mac. Ones that haven't been installed on your device will appear with an Install button next to them.

4. Install and finish
Tap the Install button next to iPhoto in the list of apps to load it on to your iPad. You'll need to repeat this process every time you run software or app updates on your device.



3. Add an app
In the sidebar, click on Applications and then find the iPhoto app package (you'll need to have downloaded the app via iTunes) in Music>iTunes>Mobile Applications.

"If you're desperate to run iPhoto on the original iPad, it can be done"

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Repair & replace guide

Everything you need to know about repairing or replacing broken and ageing parts from your favourite Apple devices

Replace your unibody MacBook's battery



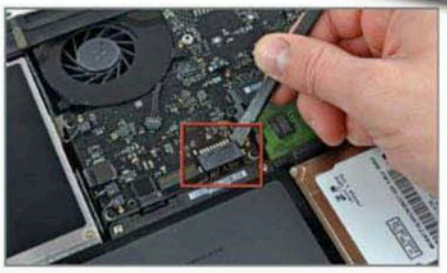
They might not be available to purchase anymore, but white MacBooks are still a firm favourite with Mac aficionados everywhere. That said, as they get older, things are bound to go wrong and if there's one place where your beloved MacBook is likely to show its age first, it's with the battery. If your machine isn't lasting as long as it should be without needing a charge, then it's time to look into replacing its battery. We're looking at the most recent unibody white MacBook here; the first to contain batteries that aren't considered user-serviceable by Apple. That should tell you that this won't be as easy as flipping the battery out without taking a few tools to your Mac. Fortunately, the process is fairly easy; just take your time and be extra careful with the battery itself.

Step-by-step | **Replace your unibody battery**



1. Backing off

Remove the eight Phillips-head screws holding your MacBook's back cover to the body of the machine and gently lift it off. Keep both the back and the screws safe and out of the way of the rest of the repair.



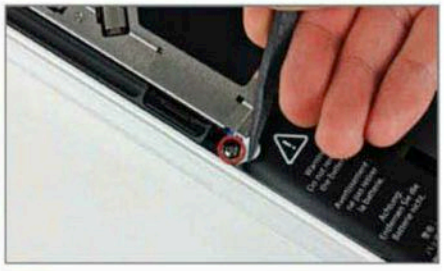
2. Disconnect it

Once you've opened up your machine, use a plastic spudger to remove the battery connector (situated by the RAM) from the Logic Board. You'll need to pry it evenly from both sides to walk it out.



3. Lose the screws

Remove the two tri-wing screws situated below the battery connection cable and place these to one side. Be sure to keep these separate from any other screws you've removed – you'll be removing a lot!



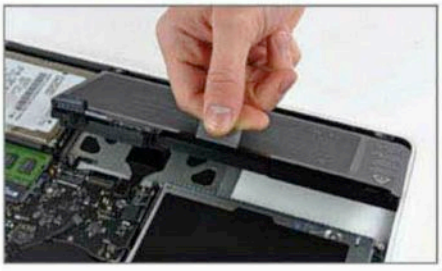
4. Ignore the warning

A further tri-wing screw is situated underneath your Mac battery's warning label. Peel this up using your spudger and remove the screw as well. Just a few more steps to complete now…



5. Three more screws

Remove the last three tri-wing screws at the bottom of your Mac's battery to free it from the machine. Again, keep this separate as they're a different size and need to be put back in the same place.



6. Lift the tab

To complete the process, lift up the plastic tab to remove your old battery. Replace it with a new one and repeat these steps in reverse to install a fresh battery and get your MacBook working like new again.

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Fix your iPhone 4's cracked back panel

If you've owned an iPhone 4 since the beginning, there's a good chance you'll have fallen foul of its nearly all-glass construction and come across a few cracks or scratches on your favourite iOS device. Most of the time these can be ignored (as long as they're not on the front screen), but if the back of your iPhone is looking particularly bad, it's worth knowing that it's easily replaced in just a few simple steps. Even if your iPhone's back panel isn't cracked, you could consider replacing it for cosmetic reasons with a different panel like the wooden ones from Monolith (**madebymonolith.com**). Either way, the whole swap should take no more than a few minutes.



"It's worth knowing that it's easily replaced in just a few simple steps"

iFixit

If you would like more help with upgrading your Mac, visit the gadget surgeons at **iFixit.com**, who kindly contributed these photos.



Back panel replaced



Unscrew it

The back panel is secured by two screws. These may be #00 Phillips-head screws or 5-point Pentalobe screws, and you'll need the right tool to remove them.



Up and out

Hold your iPhone in both hands with the back panel facing you and gently push it up with your thumbs. Take care, particularly if your back panel is smashed.



A little nudge

The iPhone 4's back panel only slides up a few millimetres so don't try to force it all the way off. You'll need to lift it clean off the iPhone's body to finish the job.



Reverse it

Once removed, follow these steps in reverse to place your new one, being careful to ensure that you don't force and break any internal components.

Quick tips for great fixes

Tool up

Before you start, ensure you have the correct tools to save having to take a trip to your nearest electronics store.



Touch the side

Before you start working internally, touch the inside of the Mac's metal casing to ground yourself and avoid any issues with electrostatic discharge.



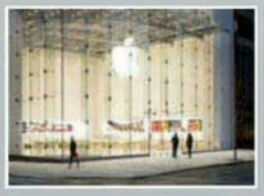
Make some space

Ensure you have enough space to spread out, particularly when performing upgrades to larger Macs. You'll be surprised how quickly space runs out!

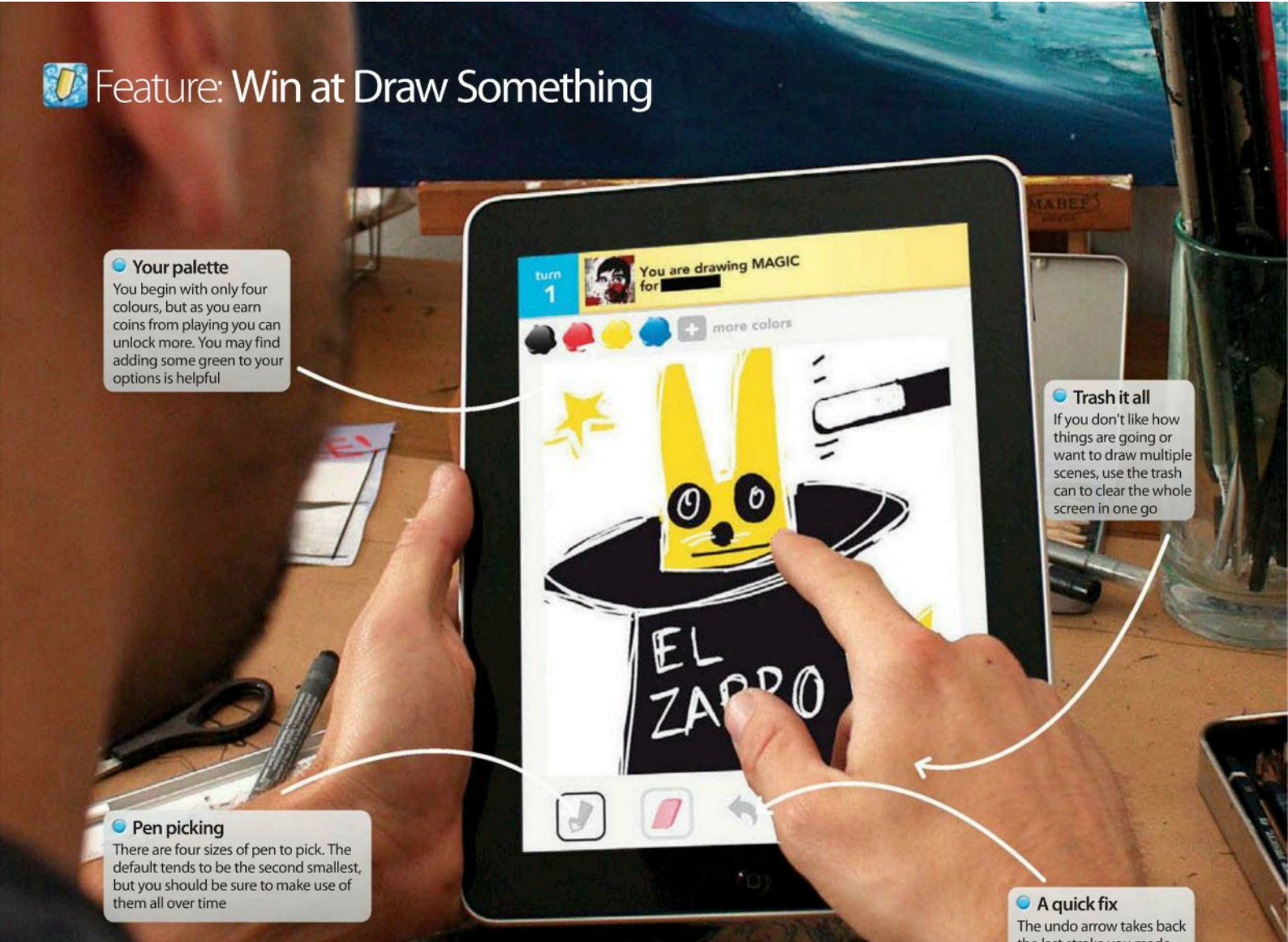


Stop and ask

If you're stuck on a repair or unsure as to what you're doing, stop and consult an expert. It's no use meddling in something you don't understand!



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Win at Draw Something

Become a master at the new app craze sweeping the planet

The latest app to be causing a big stir across devices, Draw Something is one of the simplest social games you're ever likely to find, but therein lies its appeal. At the last count, there were more than 50 million people, in over 80 countries, playing Draw Something. For those of you who have yet to join in this popular global party game, it's a version of Pictionary for the digital age that involves sketching a chosen word and inviting your opponent to guess what that word is. Drawings are played back in real-time, and it's fascinating fun to watch someone's brain ticking over as they figure out how to depict Japan or Mad Men. You know you're hooked when you wake up in the middle of the night and reach for the phone, impatient to discover if Georgia93 has managed to decipher your scribble of a hangover. Draw Something is a friendly, social game and you don't need to possess the skills of Michelangelo to enjoy playing it, but if you've been struggling to make your stick men look like Johnny Depp or Beyonce, this tutorial shares some key techniques.



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Step-by-step | Tips and tricks for better drawings



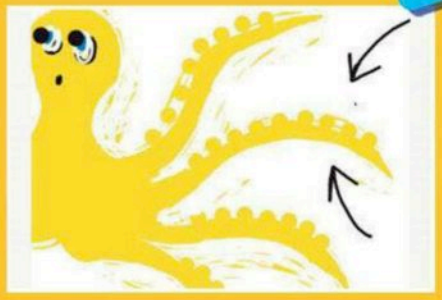
1: Blocking in colour

Daunted by a blank canvas? Create a background and key elements, with large blocks of colour. Use smaller erasers and pencils to pick out details.



2: Keep it simple

Every file that's stored on it will be visible in the sidebar. Change how these are displayed by tapping the settings cog in the top-right.



3: Draw with erasers

This octopus was sketched roughly with a large pencil. Shape and detail were defined by scratching away colour with the smallest eraser.



4: Composing the picture

Consider where to place elements of your drawing. Diagonals add movement and drama. Curved backs look far less healthy than straight.



5: LESS IS MORE!

What's left out of an image can help to tell the story – drawing only part of an object suggests its scale as in this example.



6: Zoom in close

Focus in on what is really important and fill the screen with it. Sparing use of colour will draw attention to the most important details.

Get some help with a stylus

While most people don't need a stylus it can be a powerful ally when drawing. Here are three of the best…

Just Mobile AluPen

£24.99/$24.99

www.xtand.net/alupen

We can't help but love the chunky feel of the Alupen, which feels like a child's crayon in a fantastically modern way. Despite its size, the nib is surprisingly accurate when drawing, and its large size makes it surprisingly comfortable in your hand.

Wacom Bamboo Stylus

£24.99/$29.99

www.wacom.com

The Adonit is accurate, but its many moving parts may seem a little easy to lose. The Wacom Bamboo Stylus offers a little more stability without losing the pen-like feel. It's comfortable, rugged and performs brilliantly – it's a lot more accurate than you first think once you start sketching.

Adonit Jot **£21.99/$19.99**

www.adonit.net

The problem with iOS styluses is that they have to be quite large to work with the capacitive touch-screen. Adonit get around this by adding a clear disc to the tip of the Jot, allowing for incredible accuracy when drawing. It works perfectly and is incredibly comfortable to hold in hand. This is one for those that want real pin-point accuracy.

"It works perfectly and is incredibly comfortable"

3 apps that will help you learn how to draw



How to Draw Free

Featuring 18 videos on how to draw, this is a great resource for those wanting to improve their skills. There are step-by-step lessons on how to draw faces, attempt graffiti, sketch cartoon characters and more.



Learn to Draw! £0.69/$0.99

If your needs are somewhat more remedial then you may want to go right back to basics and use this app for kids. Just don't expect not to feel patronised as you learn…



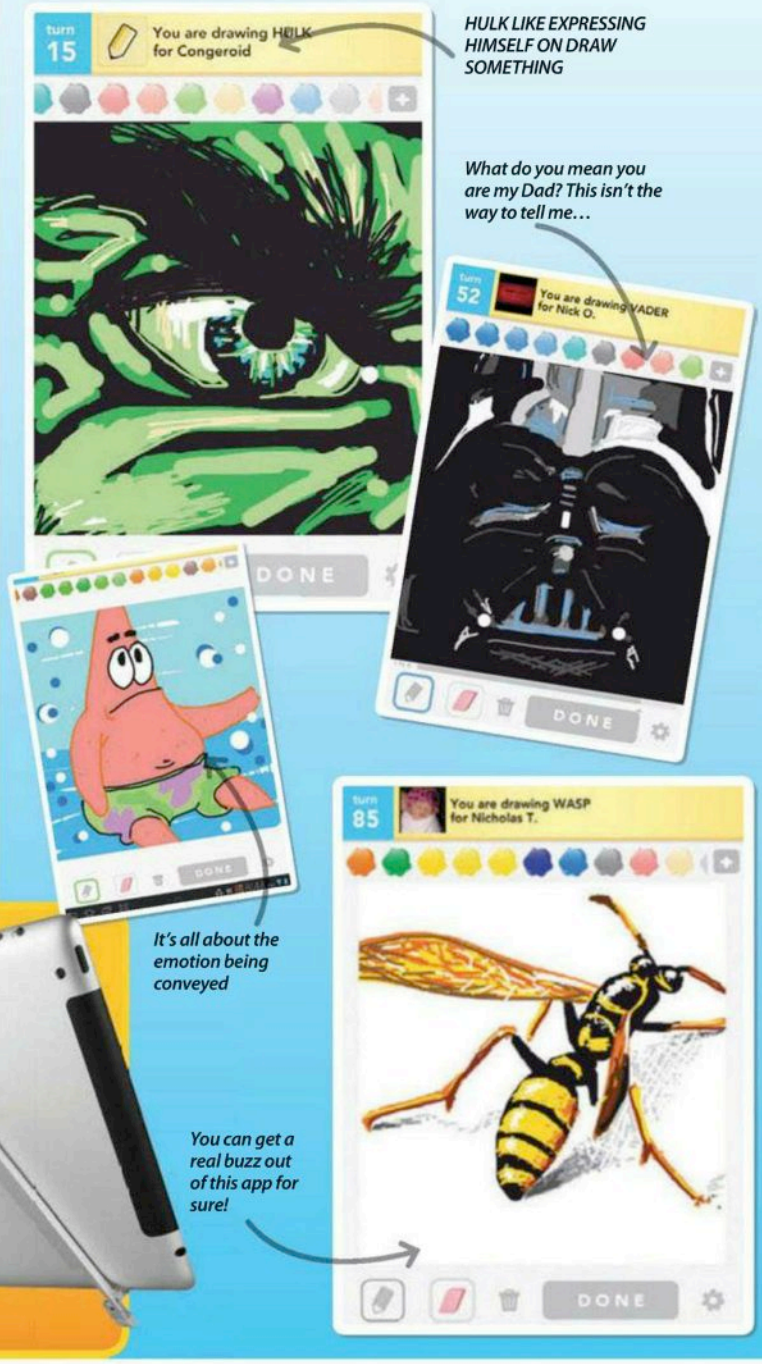
Learn to draw digital sketchbook by Walter Foster Free

This is the Rolls Royce of learning to draw apps and the one that all would-be artists should use. It's utterly brilliant and impossibly good value.

"This is the Rolls Royce of learning to draw apps and the one that all would-be artists should use"

Best of Draw Something

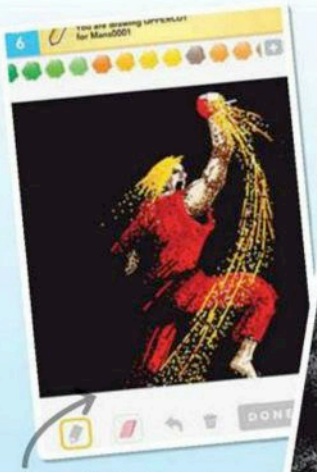
Check out some of the most incredible Draw Something efforts courtesy of bestofdrawsomething.com



Twelve South Compass Mobile Stand £39.99/$39.99

No artists' studio is complete without an easel for your canvas, and in the case of Draw Something, you'll want a great stand to hold and support your device while you create your latest masterpiece. As far as iPad stands go, there really is only one winner here, Twelve South's Compass Mobile Stand. Available in silver, black and red and built from steel and rubber, this super-flexible stand can sit at a low angle, perfect for Draw Something work, and at a high angle for showing off your finished pieces. It's the best stand in its price range.

"This super-flexible stand can sit at a low angle, perfect for Draw Something"



If you pull of the Hadouken button combo while playing Draw Something, this image appears. Fact



Is it just us that would actually pay to have this on our walls? Absolutely incredible

It might just be a panda to you, but to us this is a brilliant example of Pointillism in the style of Georges Seurat





If you cannot view this image, please enable Cookies in your magazine settings

More than just a picture, this could easily be a poster. What an amazing effort. Getting jealous now

"But I don't have the letters to spell out Michelangelo! Oh, wait, it's a ninja"



This drawing of a stapler has had around 80% too much effort put into it



Master selective colour editing in iPhoto

Making straightforward adjustments has never been simpler or as intuitive



Difficulty: Beginner

Time needed: 10 minutes

Selective colour editing is the process of adjusting the levels of individual colours within an image. With advanced editing programs this can be a complex task, requiring lots of time and expertise. However, with iPhoto this can be done with a few simple actions.

Within iPhoto there are a number of editing options grouped together. Along with a crop and straighten tool, an exposure adjustment tool, a selection of brushes and a choice of effect, you can easily find the tool to adjust the colours of your images.

Tapping on the colour adjustment tool opens up a new range of options along the base of the image. Within this toolbar is a selection of sliders, along with an options menu and a white balance adjustment tab.

In this tutorial we'll go through the finer points of these features and show you exactly what they do. iPhoto for iOS is an incredibly powerful editing tool, as you're about to find out…



The white balance of your shot can determine its overall colour. It's therefore important to adjust this prior to carrying out your selective colour editing work.

Step-by-step | iPhoto Selective colour editing



1: Selecting the colour tool

Within iPhoto there are a number of main tools that can be used for editing. The colour editing tool can be found in the toolbar along the base of the interface.



2: Saturation slider

The first of the four sliders is for saturation adjustment. Moving this to the right will boost the intensity of colours; moving it to the left will remove colour.



3: Sky colour adjustment

The second of the adjustment sliders is dedicated to altering the blues in a photo, and is therefore ideal to fine tune the colours of a bright sky or stretch of water.



4: Green adjustment

Adjusting the greens is next up. Sliding to the right will boost the intensity of the greens, and moving it to the left will simply desaturate the green areas.



5: Skin tones

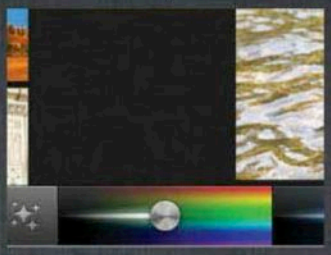
The final slider works in the same way, but is designed specifically for skin tones. This allows you to adjust the effect of the skin without boosting other colours.



6: White balance

At the end of the adjustments bar is a simple white balance tool. From here you are able to adjust the overall white balance of the shot.

Colour adjustments in action



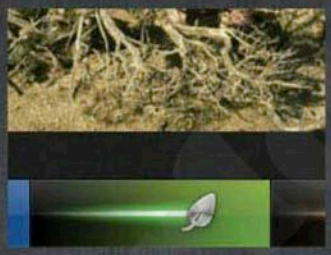
Saturation

By using the saturation slider, the entire colour range of the image is boosted, giving richer and more striking colours.



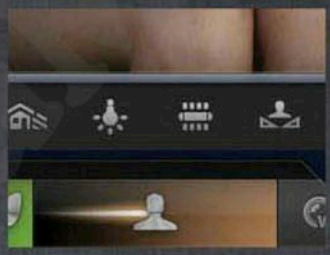
Blues

The blue slider is great for images with open stretches of sky and water, boosting these colours and tones without affecting the rest of the shot.



Greens

The green slider is useful to enhance areas such as fields and trees, helping you to bring out the colours in the different parts of your photo.

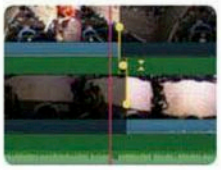


Skin tone

The skin tone of your subjects can be easily adjusted by moving the slider to the right, without affecting the overall look of the shot.

Get to know the Precision Editor in iMovie

Seamlessly compile a host of video clips to create a single professional-looking movie



Difficulty: Intermediate
Time needed: 5 minutes

iMovie is a complex but easy-to-use application that joins the iPad's iLife collection. Much like the other applications offered by Apple, it has been made to be as simple and intuitive to work with as possible.

iMovie is designed to allow you to create basic movies using clips recorded with the iPad camera, or alternatively imported through the camera connection kit. The clean user interface is both simple to understand and control, with the usual Apple attention to detail ensuring that even the most complex of tasks are straightforward to perform.

When creating a movie it is possible to use more than one video clip. This can be done by simply dragging a new clip from the camera roll palette. Once more than one video clip is inserted into the film, iMovie will automatically create a simple transition between the two. This transition is a small animation that seamlessly merges the video clips together, giving the finished article a smooth flow with a professional finish.

When using more than one video clip it's possible to select the start and finish points of the clips, cutting them down to the size you wish to use. To better control this aspect of editing the video together, there is the Precision Editor that allows for more accurate adjustments of the transition between the videos. This in turn gives you the maximum control over the final look of your movie, which is what we explore in this guide.



Precision Editor
With the Precision Editor open you can see the two clips involved in the transition, plus the amount of video that has been overlapped on each

My Project
The My Project screen shows the exact point you are at in the final video. Using this you can see how the transition works in the context of a specific scene

Merge two clips into one

The main tools you need to master…



Knowledge base

Trimming clips
On selecting a new clip from the video palette you can adjust its size before adding it to the timeline. By tapping on a clip it will become highlighted in yellow with two adjustment dots at either end. Using these it's possible to drag the video clip to the desired size. This enables you to choose the start point of the new clip before inserting it.

Tweak the transition
By double-tapping on the centre yellow dot, the Transition Settings window is called. From here you can change the animation settings of the transition

Precision Editor adjustment
The yellow line between the two video clips marks the change-over point. Using the yellow adjustment dots this can be moved to any place on either of the clips

Adjusting the transition length with the Precision Editor open enables you to see the exact section of timeline where the first video ends and the new one begins.

Step-by-step | iMovie Using the Precision Editor



1: Open a video clip

Once in iMovie, the videos in your camera roll will be displayed in the palette on the left. By tapping the clip you want, an arrow icon will appear; hit this to see the clip appear in your movie timeline.



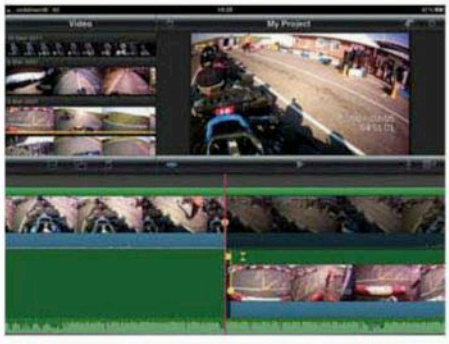
2: Attach the second video

iMovie allows for multiple video clips to be used in the same film. By navigating to the position in the timeline you wish to place the new clip, simply repeat step 1 to import the second clip.



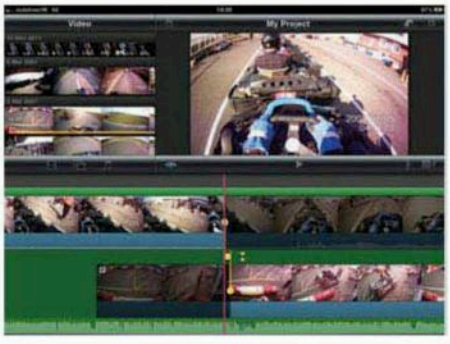
3: Widen the video

By using two fingers and swiping outwards on the timeline, the clips will stretch, placing more frames in the timeline. This allows you to pinpoint the exact position where you want to apply the transition.



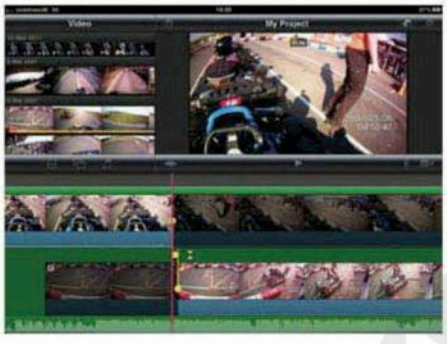
4: Open the Precision Editor

Between two video clips will be the transition icon. By tapping on this the Precision Editor arrows will appear. Tapping, or using a pinching technique, will place the new clip below the original in the editor.



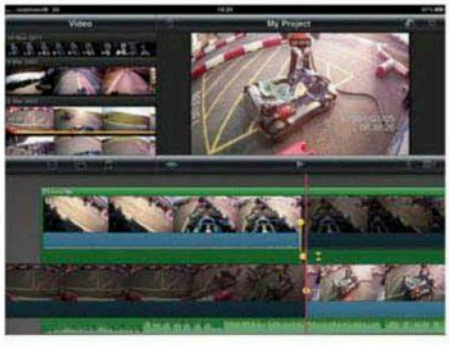
5: Transition in transit

In the Precision Editor there's a yellow adjustment bar with three yellow dots. Holding on to the middle dot and swiping left or right will adjust the position of the transition between the two clips.



6: Tweak the top clip

Using the top yellow dot, simply tap and hold before moving left or right to adjust its position. This will set the point at which the first clip will end and the transition into the new clip will begin.



7: Adjust the bottom clip

In exactly the same way as the top clip, you can simply tap and hold on the bottom adjustment dot and move along the bottom clip to select where a transition ends and the action begins.



8: Multi-clip editing

Using a two-finger motion it's possible to open up the movie clips within the Precision Editor. This enables you to make more precise adjustments to both clips at the same time.



9: Transition Settings

In the Precision Editor it's also possible to modify the transition animation settings. Simply double-tapping on the centre yellow dot will open a new window where you can tailor the effect.

Explore the keyboard settings in GarageBand

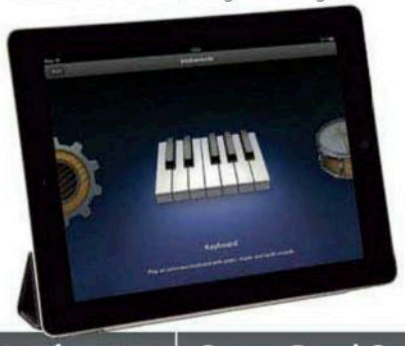
Discover the amazing depth tucked inside this virtual instrument



As you would expect, the keyboard instrument is one of the most impressive in GarageBand. Not only can you play a huge range of sounds, but you can customise and record each one, as well as add extra elements like sustain and arpeggio.

What's more you can customise the keyboard to suit your playing style and finger size. The keyboard instrument is not to be confused with Smart Keyboards. There are no gimmicks here, just plain old musical functionality and you'll be blown away by the diversity of sounds and how far you can change them.

As always, the interface is blissfully simple to navigate and with a few taps you can create and combine all kinds of sound. As with all of the instruments in GarageBand you can record musical parts with the touch of the button and add up to eight tracks to your composition, as well as exporting to GarageBand for Mac. Without further ado, let's get cracking.



Get in tune with your iPad

Become a keyboard maestro



1: Piano style

This is the simplest of the styles in the keyboard options. You are able to add sustain to the notes you play by flicking the switch to the right and you can run the Arpeggiator using the button on the right. The pure sound of the piano is kept as simple as possible.

Step-by-step | **GarageBand** Customise your keyboard and discover the Arpeggiator feature



1: Grand entrance

When you load the keyboard instrument you will see the Grand Piano as your default instrument. To customise the keyboard layout tap the keyboard icon.



2: Tap to choose

Simply tap on the keyboard type that you want to use and when you tap away from the menu, it will appear in the interface in front of you.



3: Arpeggiator

Tap on the Arpeggiator button and then flick the Run switch to the On position. This will reveal a new set of options so you can pick the sound that you want.

An arpeggio is when the notes of a chord are played in sequence one after another. In GarageBand these are played automatically by the Arpeggiator feature.

2: Cool keyboards

The actual keyboard sounds have a silver styling and users are able to dial up effects on the right-hand side. Playing with these is enormous fun and you can really alter sounds by messing about. On the left you can change the pitch by dragging the wheel around.



3: Super synths

The synth setup is a little different with two wheels on the left which can be dragged up and down. They change the pitch and modulation of the sound. On the right the controls relate to how the sound is processed. Experimenting is great fun!

Sound gallery

Inside GarageBand for iOS lies a multitude of great-sounding options





4: Get the rate right

Pick the Note Rate. The further down the list you go the faster each note in the arpeggiated sequence will play. You can alter these settings at any time.



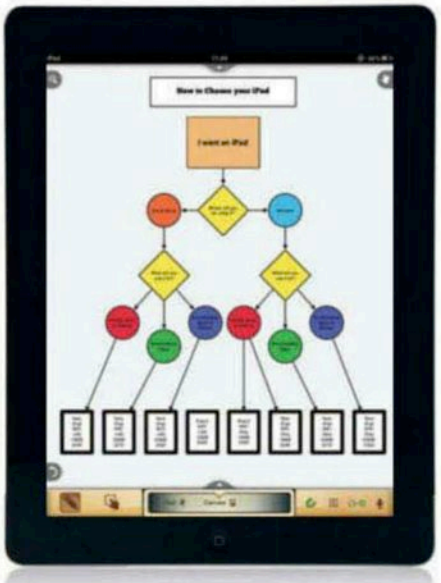
5: Set the Octave Range

By increasing the octave rate you also increase the number of notes that are played in each arpeggio. Again, experiment to get the sound you want.



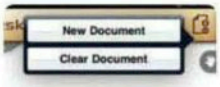
6: Get playing

Tap away from the menu to dismiss it and play the piano to your heart's content. Tapping the Arpeggiator button will add the effect with the last setting chosen.



Easily organise your ideas with iDesk for iPad

A picture tells a thousand words, and the combination of iPad and the iDesk app is the ideal way to do just that



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 20 minutes
Available: iOS App Store
Price: £4.99/$6.99

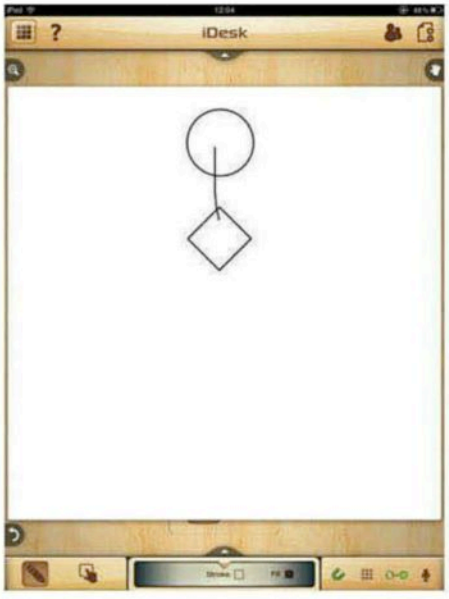
The practise of representing thoughts, processes and ideas in the form of a diagram is as old as the pencil itself, so the iPad's pick-up-and-play design makes it the perfect device for sketching ideas when you need to get your point across visually.

Whether it's brainstorming or designing flowcharts, room layouts, Venn diagrams, marketing charts or any other kind of 2D drawing, iDesk from Ten Touch is one of the most straightforward apps we've seen so far for speedily getting your ideas down and looking good, no matter what your artistic ability.

The advanced shape recognition baked into this app enables you to quickly sketch rough shapes, which are then instantly transformed into perfect regular circles and squares. These can then be swiftly connected by perfect straight lines or neat arrows simply by drawing a rough line with a finger, and filling with colour. If you are a fan of a stylus this will make your ability to get ideas down even quicker, and may feel more natural, but it's certainly not a prerequisite for this app. In this tutorial we'll show you how to quickly get started with this app and take the nucleus of an idea and develop it into something much, much more detailed.

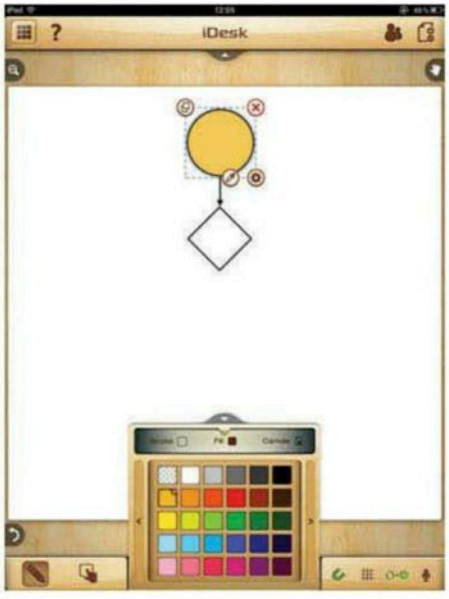
"One of the most straightforward apps we've seen so far"

Step-by-step | **iDesk for iPad** Learn the basics of iDesk



1: Connect shapes

Start by drawing two shapes. You can now connect the two by drawing a rough straight line between their centres. An arrowhead will appear to indicate the line's direction.



2: Fill with colour

Tap a shape to select it. Access its properties by tapping the small action gear button or the arrow at the bottom of the screen. Tap a colour swatch to fill the selected object with the chosen colour.



3: Change text attributes

To change the text style, open the properties window by tapping the action gear button again. Scroll through to the text page, where you can adjust the font, size, type, colour and justification.

For an encore, iDesk also lets you add audio notes to each individual item in your drawing by tapping the microphone icon in the bottom-right corner.

Perfect diagrams

Simplicity at its best…

Grid mode

These icons control the status of the grid used to align your objects on the canvas. The little magnet toggles auto-alignment to the grid, while the hash icon enables and disables the visual grid

Delete objects

Tap to select an object, then hit the 'x' button in the top-right corner of the selection to delete the object

Knowledge base

Moving experience

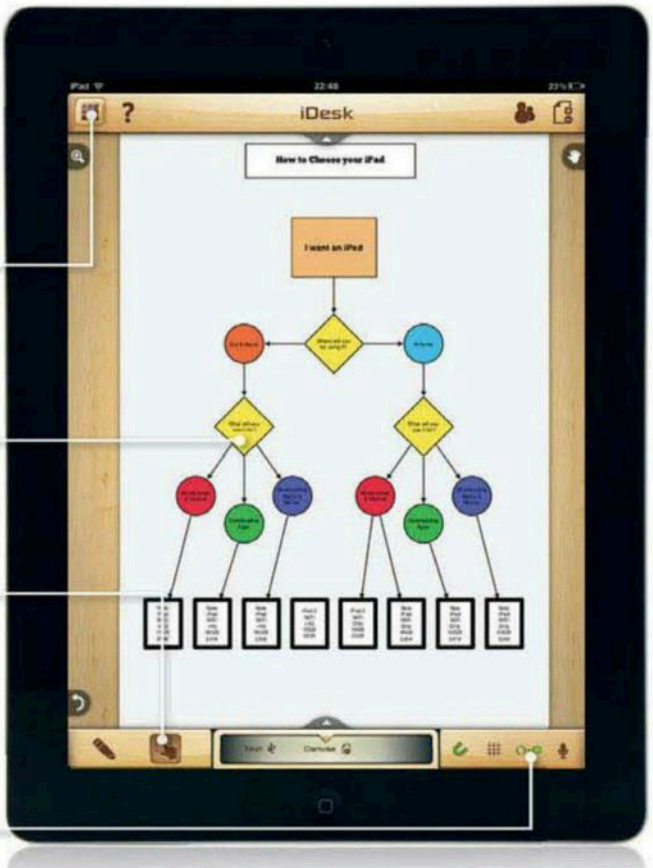
Zoom in and out of your drawing by pinching in and out. Move around the canvas while zoomed in with a two-finger drag. Objects can be rotated and scaled by using pinch and rotate gestures within the confines of a shape's border. When you move an object, its connection stretches to move with it.

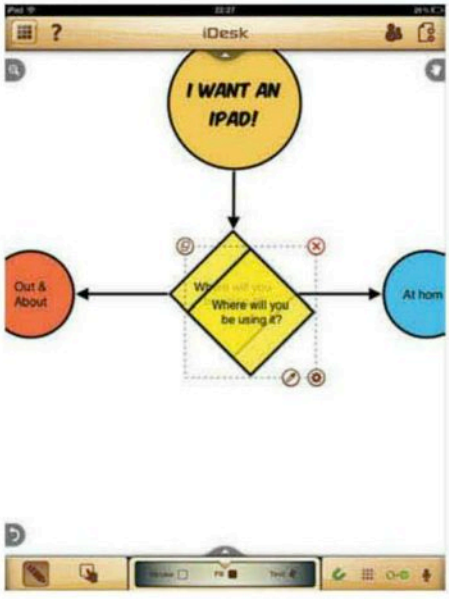
Group objects

Tap this icon in the lower-left toolbar to enter selection mode. In this mode, you can use your fingertip to draw a selection rectangle around multiple items to select them simultaneously

Recognition mode

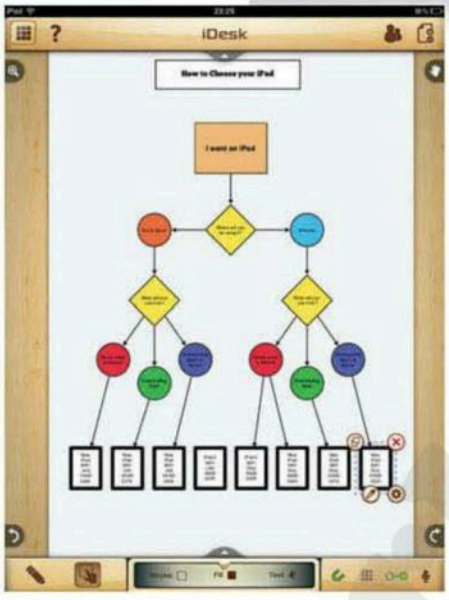
With recognition mode enabled, iDesk will interpret your squiggles and convert them into regular shapes. It's best to turn this off if you'd rather draw freehand





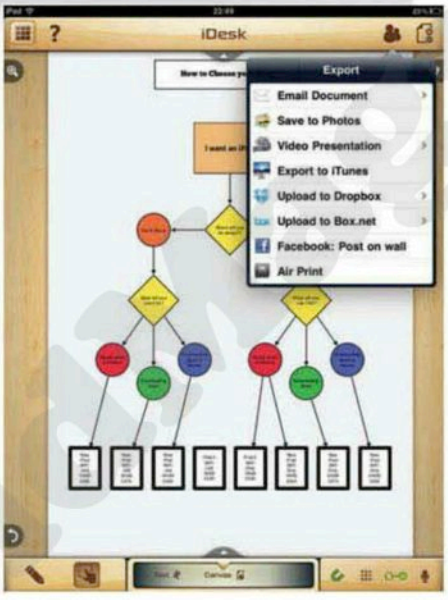
4: Duplicate objects

You can duplicate any object by tapping on the button in the top-left corner of the selection highlight. Then just move it by dragging it with a single-finger drag to its desired position.



5: Undo/redo buttons

Towards the bottom of the screen at each side you'll find the undo and redo buttons. Use these if you need to go back a step if something goes wrong, or forward if you deleted something by accident.



6: Export options

Tap the Export button to share your completed document. You can email it, save it to your Photo Roll, export a video presentation of your drawing, or upload to iTunes, Facebook, Dropbox or Box.net.

Extend your iPad's storage with AirStash+

A great option for those fed up with their iPad's restrictive storage capacity



Difficulty: Beginner
Time needed: 15 minutes
Available: iOS App Store
Price: App: Free Device: £109/$149.99

If you have owned an iPad for some time, you'll know that the only real drawback to them is when you hit your limits in terms of on board storage. Unlike Macs, iPad storage can't be expanded, but that's where Maxell's AirStash device and accompanying app comes in. It functions as a wireless hard drive (with the memory coming in the form of removable SD cards) that can be accessed by an iOS device or Mac.

One of the AirStash's best features is that its contents can be accessed and streamed easily via a web-based interface, but its accompanying iOS app is where it really comes into its own, allowing for integration with other apps, easy photo transfers and seamless streaming of HD movies.

Over the next six steps, we'll show you how to make the most of the app and subsequently your AirStash device, whether you're using it for entertainment, business, or simply expanding the storage of your iPad. Let's get started.

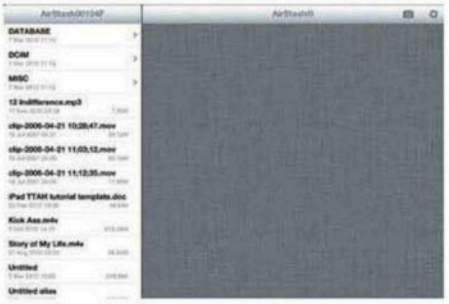


Step-by-step | AirStash+ Manage your files with AirStash+



1: Get connected

Once your AirStash is turned on, it'll create its own Wi-Fi network. Head to Settings>Wi-Fi and select the AirStash network to get connected.



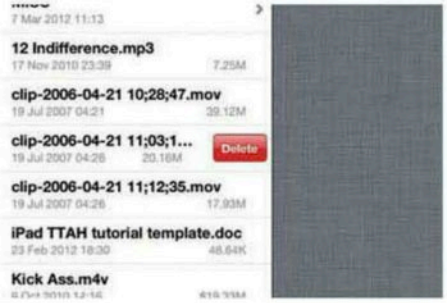
2: Browse the list

When the app is loaded and connected, every file that's stored on it will be visible in the sidebar. Tap the settings cog in the top-right to change their display.



3: Tap to stream

To view an image or movie, tap on its name in the sidebar. For videos and music, the app will take a few seconds to buffer the stream, then play it on the right.



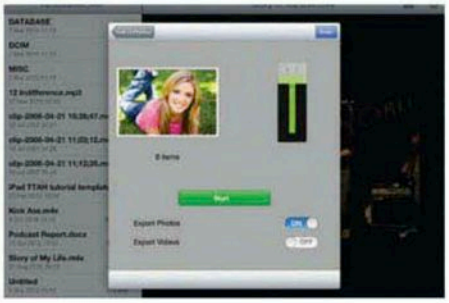
4: Swipe to delete

There are only a few file management options in the app, but if you're looking to clear some space, swipe left on any file name and hit Delete.



5: App integration

The AirStash+ works with the iWork suite. When you preview a compatible document, the option to open it with these apps is in the top-right corner.



6: Import and export

Tapping on the camera icon allows you to import and export photos. All you need to do is select the desired images and hit Import.

For more information on the AirStash device itself, check out our review in issue 106. Prices start at £109/$149.99 for the standard model with an 8GB SD card.

The AirStash+ interface

Your key to increased iPad memory

Knowledge base

Hot-swapping storage

One of the AirStash's best features is its SD card support, allowing you to easily swap out storage to ensure you always have the right files on you. For example, you may have two SD cards: one for work, with your important documents on, and one for travelling, with films and music to keep you entertained.

Working with photos

Tapping on the camera icon in the top-right corner will bring up the import and export wizard for getting photos on and off of your device in a matter of seconds

Play controls

For audio and video, AirStash+'s playback controls are the same as the native iOS ones. The icon in the far-right will let you view things in full-screen mode

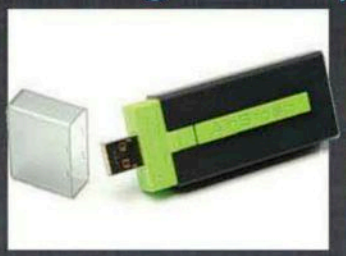
Files on the left

Every file and folder on your AirStash is available to browse through in the sidebar on the left of the app's interface. This view can be tweaked in the app's settings

Starting over

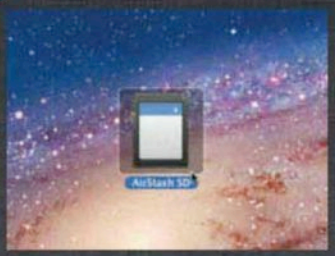
If you've added any new files to the AirStash and they're not appearing in the files sidebar, hit the refresh icon at the bottom to find and add them to it

Adding files to your AirStash



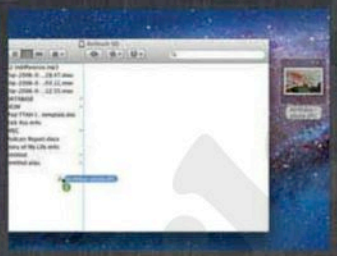
Plug it in

There are two ways to get the AirStash connected to your computer for file transfers – either by inserting the SD card into a card reader or via USB.



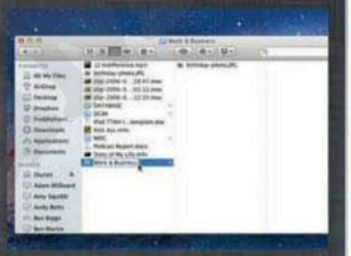
Find it

Open up a new Finder window on your Mac and look for either the SD card or the device if you've connected it via USB. Double-click to view files.



Drag it on

To add files to the AirStash, simply drag them from elsewhere on your Mac on to the device or SD card icon. It's that easy – your only limit is its capacity.



Keep it organised

If you don't have the luxury of multiple SD cards to hot-swap your storage, you can keep your work and personal documents organised in folders.







Play pairs the cool new way

InstaMatch £0.69/$0.99

Have fun with your Instagram shots

Compatibility
• iPhone, iPod touch and iPad

Developer
• Tiny Hearts Limited



If you're a fan of the hugely popular, retro photography app Instagram then you'll love InstaMatch - The Instagram Game. The clever people at Tiny Hearts have come up with the brilliant and unique combination of turning either your own photos or any of the 500 million photos available on Instagram into a very cool, classic card-matching puzzle game.

Created for both iPad and iPhone, the beautifully designed interface presents you with the option of one or two players, plus three levels of ability: Easy comprises of 12 cards, Normal offers 20 and Hard includes 20 moving cards. The cards are images that are divided into pairs and the object of the game is to match them up. If you're using your own photos, the pair will be one image repeated but if you're using all Instagram images then the pairs will be made up of two similar images. First you're given a preview of all the photos laid out in a grid format – the 20 card option can be hard to view on an iPhone so tap on each individual image to enlarge. When you've committed those to memory, tap the Play icon to start playing. The images will be face down, simply tap one at a time and memorise them until you find a pair.

The hardest option sporadically switches cards around the board to add extra confusion. If you're playing with the tagged images on Instagram then you can choose between genres such as Nature, Food, Animals, Cities and World Wonders using the drop-down menu on the left of the interface. Below that, you can also choose to play with your own photographs by tapping the My Photos button (you'll need to log in to your Instagram account to enable this feature). Once you're finished, view the images up close by tapping on one, and using the arrows to scroll through. This also displays the photographer's name and allows you to add a 'Like'. Integrated sharing options mean that you can share your results with all the usual social media outlets.

This brilliant app will provide you with hours of fun, exercise your memory and will certainly inspire you to get out snapping with Instagram.

"This brilliant app... will certainly inspire you to get out snapping with Instagram"

Overall Rating ★★★★★

You get 500 million snaps to choose from

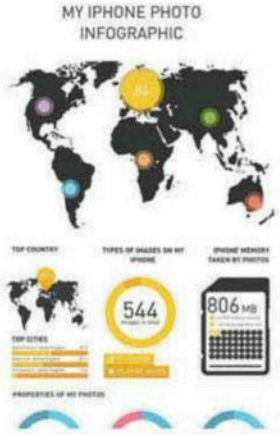




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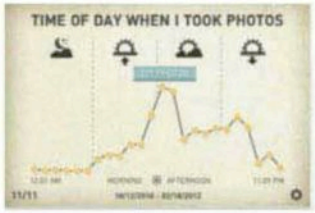
Photo Stats £0.69/$0.99

Compatibility • iPhone, iPod touch, iPad
Developer • Dear Future Astronaut AB



Visualise your iPhone photography usage with stylish infographics using Photo Stats. This very cool app turns all your iPhone photo data into some very stylish diagrams including a line graph that charts the time of day you've taken the most photos, a world map indicating the countries you've taken the most images in and a graph displaying your most productive days. There are some fun icons which present interesting data such as how much memory your photos use and which is the preferred orientation. The great thing is that all this can be achieved with one tap of a button and the app does all the hard work for you. There are also a variety of themes and sharing options to choose from.

Photo Stats gives you all the info you need



Overall Rating ★★★★½

645 PRO £1.99/$2.99

Compatibility • iPhone
Developer • Michael Hardaker



645 PRO is a photography app designed for experienced SLR users. Offering far more control than your average photography app, 645 PRO offers a comprehensive range of manual settings such as white balance, exposure and focus lock that can be managed directly from the camera as you shoot. Other features worth a mention include the ability to choose between spot or multi-zone metering, a selection of authentic film effects and a split-screen, spirit level. However, the feature that really makes this app stand out from the crowd is the fact that it intercepts the image before the iPhone compresses it as a JPG, saving it as a TIFF which you can then access via iTunes.

Overall Rating ★★★★½

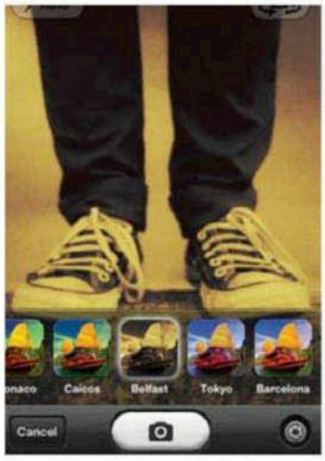
"645 PRO offers a comprehensive range of manual settings"



Enjoy greater control…



And take even better pictures



View filter effects as you shoot

Wood Camera £1.49/$1.99

Compatibility • iPhone, iPod touch, iPad
Developer • Bright Mango



If you're after more creative control of your photos then this is the app for you. Although Wood Camera offers all the retro and vintage style filters that have become synonymous with iPhone photography apps, there are two things that set this one apart from the rest. First is the ability to view filter effects as you shoot, rather than applying them later, enabling you to adapt your shooting accordingly. The second feature is the ability to determine the strength of the filter effect using a slider, so you can opt for more subtle effects. There are plenty of filters to choose from, a selection of frames to use and a tilt-shift effect. Highly recommended!

Overall Rating ★★★★½



Five creative photo apps

WaterMyPhoto

£0.69/$0.99 **Developer** • Wilson Tjoa



Add amazing, realistic-looking reflections to photos as you shoot, or choose existing images from your photo library. You can also take advantage of additional editing options and the free bonus app when you download the excellent WaterMyPhoto app.

TypoInsta

£1.49/$1.99
Developer • Kousuke Araki



Take your Instagram imagery to the next level by adding text to your photos using TypoInsta. Choose from 100 fonts and 29 different styles with cool frames and filters, then share your shots on Facebook or Twitter.

Thermal Infrared Camera Pro £0.69/$0.99

Developer • Dan Ciobanu



Capture your world in infrared using this fun, easy-to-use app. For just 69p you can create visually exciting images, plus this app comes with front and back camera ability, flash and a self timer facility - great for unsteady hands!

Vintage Camera Pro £0.69/$0.99

Developer • Presselite



A worthy competitor to retro camera app favourites, Instagram and Hipstamatic, this app is worth downloading just for the seriously cool interface. We particularly love the photo gallery designed as a roll of film.

Slow Shutter Camera Free Free

Developer • JPower Designs LLC



Create amazing long exposure effects such as misty water or light trails using Slow Shutter Camera Free. Manually control shutter speed and ISO, plus you can set a self-timer. There are also some nice filters available as in-app purchases.

Antonio Carluccio's Simple Cooking £3.99/$5.99

Cook up a classic Italian feast with Antonio Carluccio

Developer • Dab Hand Media

Compatibility • iPad



Enjoy simple, traditional Italian food courtesy of the highly regarded and much-loved Italian cookery writer, Antonio Carluccio. If you love classic, well-executed Italian food then you will probably have eaten in one of the restaurants that carry the Carluccio name. For a snip of the price of a Penne della Casa, you can now recreate the authentic flavours of the Mediterranean in your own home.

The app's home screen offers a range of standard recipe options including Starters, Mains and Desserts. Although, rather than being taken to a list of recipes by tapping on a link, there's a really nice cover flow device that enables you to scroll through images, making it a far more visual experience than a standard cookery book.

If you like the look of it, just tap the image and you'll be taken to the recipe. Then you can choose to follow the steps by swiping the dialog box at the top of the interface, or there's a short video featuring Antonio which is brilliant for mastering techniques.

There are six starters, ten mains and three desserts, which is a little on the thin side considering the price of the app but then that does sum up the ethos of the Mediterranean diet – uncomplicated, balanced and well-refined. Most importantly, the recipes we tested were easy to follow, and created using simple techniques without the need for expensive equipment, using accessible ingredients. Recipes were ultimately successful, making the app perfect for beginners.

"What this app lacks in recipes it more than makes up for in Italian charm"

The rustic design of the app reflects the Italian theme, it's also fairly intuitive and easy to use. There are plenty of bonus features which more than compensates for the lack of recipes. My Recipes allows you to add your favourites by tapping the heart icon. Top Tips offers video tutorials on useful techniques such as sharpening knifes and preparing a variety of ingredients. There's also a guided tour of Carluccio's herb garden. The Larder feature offers a comprehensive guide to basic ingredients such as spices, plus indispensable kitchen gadgets and utensils and a guide to cooking pasta. You can write notes within the recipe while cooking, which then can be stored within the Notebook for easy access.

What this app lacks in recipes it more than makes up for in Italian charm. So if you're a foodie, love Italian cooking or are just starting out in the kitchen, this could be the app for you.

Overall Rating ★★★★½

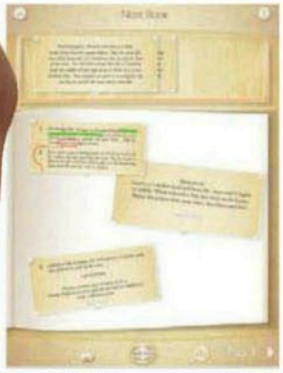




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Pick from a truly stunning array of delicious looking recipes

Good Food Healthy Recipes for iPad £2.49/$3.99

Compatibility • iPad

Developer • BBC Worldwide LTD

Having tried and tested a significant number of the 150 plus recipes within this app, we've yet to find a bad one. Offering plenty of fresh ideas alongside healthy takes on less healthy classics such as chicken korma and fish and chips, each recipe offers all the nutritional data you need for a calorie-controlled diet. The photography is elegant and inspiring while the design is refined and easy to navigate. The timer button at the top of the interface is also an indispensable feature when

Add and remove recipes from your favourites list



you're in the kitchen. Great recipe ideas, inspirational and easy to use with consistently good results, this app is a must for anyone looking for fuss-free healthy options.

Overall Rating ★★★★★

Martha Stewart Cookies £2.99/$4.99

Compatibility • iPad

Developer • Callaway Digital Arts Inc

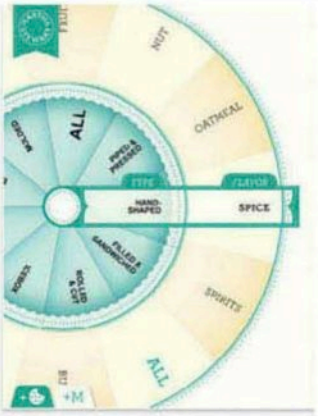
With several innovative, beautifully designed iPad apps already under the belt of the multi-billion dollar Martha Stewart brand, we knew this app wouldn't be a disappointment. And we were right – brilliant use of animation, exquisite typography and first-class photography that will make your mouth water. This is everything you want from a Lifestyle app. If you appreciate good design, you should check this out even if you don't care for cookies. Recipes range from basic spice stars to more

It is impossible not to be enthused by this app – it's a stunning effort



sophisticated fennel, orange and nut biscotti, and there are plenty to choose from. Comprehensive, easy-to-follow instructions are just the icing on the cookie.

Overall Rating ★★★★★



The app is incredibly well realised and a joy to use. It makes baking better!



Create all kinds of cupcakes – the only limit is your imagination

Hello, Cupcake! £1.99/$2.99

Compatibility • iPad/iPhone/iPod touch

Developer • Cullinate, INC

Following on from the phenomenally successful series of Hello, Cupcake! books, this app shows you how to get creative with cupcakes. Bucking the trend for pastel icing and flowers, these creations take cupcakes to the next level. Create penguins, rubber ducks or even spaghetti and meatballs using just icing, sweets and snacks. If you can drag yourself away from the hilarious, stop-motion animation (the penguin was our personal favourite), you can use the detailed instructions,

Get to grips with the tools you need to do the job



video tutorials and voice overs to start creating. There are ten brilliant projects to choose from, plus some in-app purchases if you want to add to the collection. A must-have.

Overall Rating ★★★★★

Top five apps for cooking

Philadelphia Cookbooks HD Free

Developer • Kraft Foods Europe Services GmbH

We loved the menu options designed as book spines on a shelf. There are heaps of recipes, from party favourites to tempting desserts, plus you can search for recipes based around whatever's in your fridge.

The Photo Cookbook – baking £2.99/$4.99

Developer • ditter.projektagentur GmbH

This really is baking made easy with every step of every recipe beautifully shot. The app is divided vertically into four categories including cakes & traybakes, pastries, small cakes & biscuits and breads. Scroll up and down to browse.

This Morning Food Free

Developer • ITV PLC

If you like the TV show then you'll like this taster pack with eight videos and 20 recipes from Phil Vickery and Gizzi Erskine. There are Quick and Easy options, Family Favourites, options for Everyday plus recipes for special occasions.

Recipics £0.69/$0.99

Developer • The Appstillery Ltd

A great idea although not fully realised. Recipics allows you to store photos of recipes you've found or made, along side webpages of your favourites in one place that can be accessed at anytime. We're hopeful that updates will improve it, too.

Good Food Quick Recipes for iPad £2.49/$3.99

Developer • BBC Worldwide LTD

Another winner from the ever-reliable BBC, this time focusing on quick recipes. Like the others in the series, great ideas, easy to follow with accessible ingredients. A perfect app for a time-challenged, working parent.

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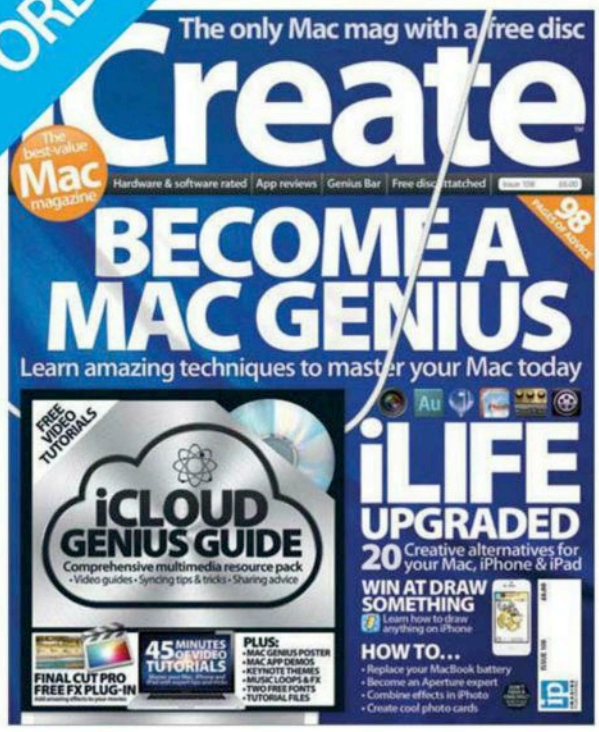
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Seagate GoFlex Satellite 500GB £149.99/$199.99

Simultaneously stream media to eight devices? It sounds too good to be true!

Key features

- 500GB hard drive
- USB 3.0 connection included
- Firewire 800 and Thunderbolt support

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The Satellite's huge 500GB capacity is enough to satisfy most

Portable storage is quickly becoming extremely affordable, to the point where companies are able to add extra features to external drives without pushing up the cost. This 500GB hard drive from Seagate also includes a small wireless transmitter that broadcasts its own network to which you can connect your devices. It works on all platforms too, so whether you want to check a document on your MacBook Air or watch a movie on your iPad, you can do it all, wirelessly.

The drive is initially set up for Windows, but an included file allows you to prepare it for use with your Mac. It's an awkward system, and one that takes a little while, but you will only have to do it once. When it's done, you can add all your files onto the device and wait for them to copy across. You'll only find a USB 3.0 cable in the packaging, which is a shame, as Macs will automatically lower the transfer speed to USB 2.0.

Adding a lot of files can be a long process because of this slower connection, but once it's done you probably won't have to switch too many files around thanks to the huge capacity of the disk. FireWire and Thunderbolt connections are available from Seagate too, so if you do plan to transfer data regularly there is a solution for more speed.

> "You probably won't have to switch too many files around thanks to the huge capacity of the disk"

If you like this...

You might also like...

Kingston Wi-Drive 32GB
£99.67/$179.99

It's cheaper and offers SSD storage for even faster access, but it only stores 32GB of data compared to the Satellite's massive 500GB.





"Once they started, the streaming was smooth with no lag whatsoever – it was highly impressive"

For the iPad and iPhone there is a free, universal app called GoFlex Media that will let you access all your data. Once you switch on the GoFlex satellite you will need to connect to the newly created Wi-Fi network through your Settings app and launch the app. From here you can browse through all the files, tapping to load up content. On other devices, log on to the network and open your browser and you'll be taken to the GoFlex's web interface. This looks incredibly similar to the iPad and iPhone app and works just as well for accessing your media.

Streaming is really fast and the quality is incredibly high on every device. The app and web interface sadly only support a limited number of video formats (H.264 video in MP4 formats), which is a shame when HD content is more regularly found in AVI and MKV file types. That said, there are work around apps such as OPlayer to get these running on your iPad. We tested a HD video and it was jumpy on even the new iPad, but that's not the Satellite's fault – the iPad simply hasn't been built to handle HD video yet.

Up to eight devices can simultaneously access content on the device, with separate videos being run perfectly. We noticed that they initially loaded a little slower when more than four devices tried to connect at once, but once they started, the streaming was smooth with no lag whatsoever – it was highly impressive. In fact, accessing all the files was simple and fast – it performed above expectations.

The newest firmware update also adds the ability to connect to another Wi-Fi network alongside that created by the drive, so that you can continue to browse the web even when you are streaming from the device. It's a fantastic feature that frees up your iPad to do everything you expect alongside the drive's functions.

The drive itself features a battery that lasts for an impressive six to seven hours on a full charge, and adapters to keep it going both through a wall plug and in a car. It looks great, too, with a design that's reminiscent of an iPhone 4S. We would've liked to see a bit of metal rather than the all-plastic casing, but it's perfectly serviceable and is one reason that the drive manages to stay so cool.

For the price, there is no better way to boost your portable storage – you can now bring every film you own on a trip and access them all quickly and easily. It's affordable, simple to use, and ticks all the right boxes.

Questions answered

Because we get to play with stuff before you do…

"Will this work with devices like my iMac, and if so, will they be able to play high definition content?"

It will work with any device with an internet browser, but sadly Mac's don't support HD playback. If you want, you can download the file you want to watch to your machine, so if you have an AVI file you want to view you can pull it off the drive and save it to your Mac and watch it using an app like VLC player.

"How much of a simple task is it to set up a second Wi-Fi network to continue browsing normally?"

Very. Tap the Wireless button in the app and you'll have a choice of networks. Input the password and you'll be connected straight away so you browse as normal.

Killer feature

Super storage

While the multiple-device support and battery life are fantastic features, the real killer feature is that this 500GB drive will likely hold all of your films, along with a huge amount of music, documents and a ton of photos.

Buy now?

Pros A lot of storage, a great battery life and a brilliant app in an affordable package

Cons The lack of included FireWire is disappointing, and formatting it for Mac takes time

★★★★★

DiskStation DS212j £253.99/$199.99

Harness the power of network-attached storage and RAID technology for safe backups and smooth media streaming

Key Features

- Internet-based access
- RAID setup
- Works with iOS and OS X

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Apple Time Capsule
£249.99/$299.99
It might not do as much as the DiskStation, but Apple's Time Capsule offers a lot of storage and native connectivity for a similar price.



Network-attached storage (NAS) might not sound like the most exciting technology in the world, but if you've ever wished you could simultaneously back up multiple Macs with Time Machine, share your iTunes Library across computers, access files from any machine or download torrents without the need of a computer, then Synology's entry-level NAS solution, the DiskStation, will allow you to do just that.

The DiskStation itself is fairly unassuming in its design and the plastic casing feels a little cheap. That said, this isn't designed to be a mobile storage solution, rather one that stays put in your home or office, so it's more than fit for purpose and feels a lot sturdier once you've installed hard drives (not included) into the two 3.5-inch SATA slots. The hard drive installation is the most complex part of the DiskStation's physical setup process, and even that's not too taxing. Once that's out of the way, all that's left to do is plug it in and hook it up to a computer on your network using an Ethernet cable.

In terms of software setup, things get a little more complex. The initial stages are easy – simply download the firmware from Synology's website and use the setup assistant to install it on the DiskStation. Once that's out of the way, you'll be redirected to a web-based interface where you're able to access and set up a myriad of functions. Once you're done, however, you'll be able to enjoy one of the most versatile storage systems we've ever seen.

Whether you're using your DiskStation in a home or an office environment, it has got a lot to offer. On the most basic level you can set it up as a Time Machine backup location that's accessible from any Mac on your network, with the two hard drives improving data security or reaching some impressive read/write speeds. More advanced users will allow the DiskStation to be set up as an iTunes server to share music or even as a standalone station to download files or torrents even when your Mac is off. There are an impressive set of features here, as long as you're prepared to spend some time setting it all up.



Questions answered

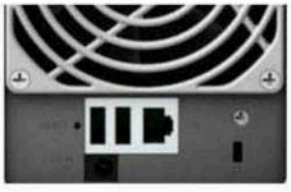
Because we get to play with stuff before you do...

"What storage options do I have with the DiskStation? Can I add any extra drives at a later date?"

The DiskStation only has room for two 3.5-inch (or 2.5-inch with an adapter) SATA drives, so you're limited to how much you're willing to spend on storage. That said, you can connect external hard drives to the DiskStation using the two USB drives on the back of the device. You'll also need to set these up in the web app.

"How long does it take to get the DiskStation set up and ready to work?"

This really depends on what you're planning on doing with the DiskStation, but the physical setup can be completed in a matter of minutes and the software setup may take a little longer.



Killer feature

Cross-platform

Not only can you access Synology's DiskStation from any Mac, PC or Linux machine (providing they're on the same network), the DS File app lets you access files on the device from any Android or iOS device.

Buy now?

Pros Hugely versatile and flexible in terms of features and uses

Cons The web-based interface could do with a little more love

★★★★●

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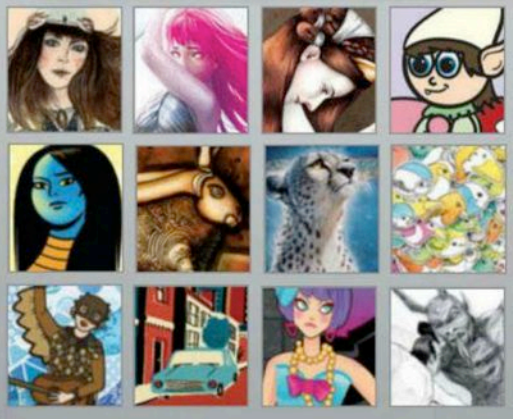
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Philips Fidelio SoundCurve £350/$399.95

Stunning SoundCurve design and AirPlay functionality – what's not to love about this Philips speaker? We find out…

Key Features

- 30W RMS output power
- SoundCurve equaliser
- AirPlay compatible

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Bowers & Wilkins Zeppelin
£500/$600

The Zeppelin Air has superior ergonomic design flair to the Fidelio SoundCurve, matching its AirPlay functionality with impressive 24-bit audio clarity. Its upgraded digital signal processing concludes why it's worth extra.



Having prior experience with products from the Philips Fidelio range, we were enthused about testing this edition. The Philips Fidelio SoundCurve wireless speaker with AirPlay may seem a bit of a protracted title for any device, but saying its name should be where most effort ends with this speaker.

Out of the box, the Fidelio SoundCurve matches a streamline design with smart and simple functionality. Configuring this speaker is a one-time affair. Once synced to AirPlay, connection is secure and open to four generations of iDevice.

Set up is detailed through an illustrated guide, so even new users with no prior experience of wireless assembling will manage. The Fidelio does offer a quick way to sync for contemporary users. If in the possession of a more recent router, simply press the WPS button on your router, flip the SoundCurve around and tap the Wi-Fi button on the rear. In both scenarios, simply open iTunes, click the AirPlay icon and choose your Fidelio option to finally match up to your speaker.

Your music should soon be blasting in no time, but sadly that wasn't the case first time around. Reconnecting the device was a must, even then we experienced 'jumpy' volume increasing and decreasing levels when operated in-device. Disconnection also occurred sporadically (then again, that could have been an individual case, or determined by the router).

Once you do get into full swing, it's at this point that you'll quickly appreciate the audio aptitude of this device. The Fidelio SoundCurve emits a mind boggling amount of volume. The Philips patented SoundCurve design ensures a highly effective acoustic sound. PureDigital sound technology and 3L acoustic volume, allocated to each speaker woofer, means crisp treble and resonant bass.

This makes sound near incredible at the highest levels. The machine's five-band equaliser automatically handles frequencies for multiple music genres without fuss.

The associate DockStudio app opens the whole device up to even more impressive possibilities and customisation. Seven thousand worldwide internet radio channels are available to stream, along with a customisable music clock alarm, as well as the ability to browse through your music collection and share what you're listening to with friends via social networks.

Questions answered

Because we get to play with stuff before you do…

"How do I work the Philips Fidelio SoundCurve if I don't have a WPS router?"

Using WPS is the most straightforward approach, but unfortunately only more recent routers have this feature, so without it what should you do? Well investing in this product is a must to utilise this device for its intended purpose. But the Philips Fidelio SoundCurve does come equipped with Aux In connectivity. USB ports are available, specified for charging only.

"I've heard that the Fidelio range is a little basic aesthetically. Do you agree?"

We wouldn't say this was true. In fact the range has many looks, all of which will correspond to your iOS devices, with a variety of chrome, black hard plastic gloss and LED lit controls in each model.



Killer feature

AirPlay connectivity

Letting you wirelessly play your iTunes Library across your home, AirPlay functionality adds a wow-factor to most devices. The SoundCurve is no different.

Buy now?

Pros Power up and play across multiple speakers

Cons Wireless connections can be disrupted, but this should be fixed easily enough

★★★●●

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iPad Camera Connection Kit
£25/$29



Make your iPad even more useful with the Camera Connection Kit. It allows you to connect your camera and import your pictures directly to the camera roll.

The point-and-shoot category of compact cameras is fiercely contested and many camera makers have resorted to the inclusion of ever more random features to try and stand out. This option from Samsung bucks that trend by concentrating on making taking great photos easy. It has its share of bells and whistles, of course, but first and foremost it takes amazing snaps.

In its Smart mode it detects the type of scene before you and changes settings to automatically capture the best picture possible. The result is a camera that you can literally point and shoot. The setting is good enough that you can, if you want to, forget the rest of the settings and still get great shots with good colour representation and quick processing.

However, there are many more modes to take advantage of including a really clever image stabilisation option which is ideal for action shots or for situations like music events where you might get jostled as you shoot. The scene modes are also very good with a full 12 different options tucked inside including a Dawn mode and a very useful Backlight mode where you can get a better shot when people are lit from behind. Operation of the WB750 is a breeze with a simple button setup and very negotiable, logical menu system. The mode wheel at the top of the device feels solid and well built, as does the click wheel on the back that will guide you through menu options. Overall construction is very good with the whole unit feeling really solid. Access to all of the ports is easy with removable plastic coverings that have become a staple for this type of camera and the screen is excellent too, with the three inches being put to good use with 460,000 pixels crammed into the space.

Add to this 1080p HD video capture and a 3D mode for 3D images, HDR mode, live panoramas and you have a compact camera that can really compete with the best on the market. We love the simplicity of the Smart setting and got some incredibly lush shots in every mode. This is a perfect camera for those that like ease of use, as well as for those that wish to take more control without having to move out of the compact bracket. All round, a great piece of kit.



"This option from Samsung bucks that trend by concentrating on making taking great photos easy"



Questions answered

Because we get to play with stuff before you do...

"This looks to be a great camera overall – does it have a Macro mode at all for shooting closeups?"

This is perhaps the one weakness of the camera. The 18x optical zoom is great but focusing is not always plain sailing. Compared to other compacts it does a great job, but if you want more you'll need a removable lens hybrid.

"Can I send the HDMI signal straight to my television from the WB750?"

Yes, you can, however you will need a miniHDMI to HDMI cable to do so. Buy one online and get the cheapest possible.

Killer feature

Smart simplicity

Point and shoot is by far the best way to describe this camera. The Smart mode makes taking top-quality shots a cinch for anyone.

Buy now?

Pros A really well-built, easy-to-use camera that offers stunning results

Cons For those that want pinpoint control over every aspect of a shot this may be a tad too simple

★★★★●



nScreen Deluxe £129.95/$149.99

Letting you effortlessly stream media to a HD-enabled device

System Specs

- HDMI/composite connection
- Supports iOS, Android and PC
- Simple setup process

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Apple TV £99/$99

It might not have the same cross-platform compatibility as the nScreen, but the Apple TV does support both 1080p HD and AirPlay mirroring from the Mac.



AirPlay mirroring has been around for some time and, for the most part, it works well. That said, if you're looking for a solution that works with more than just iOS devices (which may well be a situation that crops up, particularly in an office environment), then you'll need something slightly more flexible. Honestech's nScreen Deluxe aims to do just that, allowing you to wirelessly stream any media to your HD TV or projector from your iPhone or iPad. The nScreen, disappointingly, doesn't support Macs, but does allow PC and Android users to join in on the fun. It's a bit of shame, but there's still no denying that its compatibility is pretty impressive.

Out of the box, the nScreen unit itself is no bigger than a conventional wireless router and has some pretty similar physical connectivity options in the form of USB, Ethernet, HDMI and composite. One of the nicest surprises here is that the nScreen comes bundled with both a composite and HDMI cable – something you rarely see included in the price for devices like this. Setup is a breeze. Simply hook up your nScreen with your TV or projector using the supplied cables, give it some juice via the included power adapter and turn it all on. It will automatically transmit its own Wi-Fi network for you to connect your devices to (although you can link it to your existing Wi-Fi network via a router and PC app). The accompanying iOS apps are free to download from the App Store.

In practice, the nScreen holds up fairly well. Once we'd downloaded the iOS apps, updated the nScreen's firmware (which is easily done via a USB stick) and connected to its own Wi-Fi network, our iPhone and iPad were able to quickly stream both photos and videos to the nScreen and were played out perfectly on a HD projector. The only stumbling block here was 1080p HD videos, which seemed stuttered and appeared a little laggy. However, 720p videos were handled by the nScreen with aplomb. PDF files could even be streamed and annotated live via a separate app. The nScreen also handled multiple devices, with the most recent device to connect heading to the front of the queue and taking over the stream.

1080p HD issues aside, in a business environment, we could really see the nScreen excelling. It's easy to set up and use, compatible with a huge range of devices and, most importantly, it delivers emphatically on its promises.

Questions answered

Because we get to play with stuff before you do…

"What are the nScreen's apps like? Usually these things tend to be clunky."

While we can't speak for the Android equivalents, the iOS apps are slick. It would be nice to see landscape orientation on the iPad, but that's being fussy!

Killer feature

Super-fast setup

Once you've plugged the nScreen into the mains and hooked it up to your TV, monitor or projector, it'll create its own Wi-Fi network for you to connect to. Once you've downloaded the nScreen app you'll be good to go.

Buy now?

Pros Simple setup, small unit size, and great compatibility

Cons No Mac support, and 1080p video is a little ropey

★★★★●

Deus Ex: Human Revolution £34.99/$49.99

An eerie tactical battle taking the Mac App Store by surprise

System Specs

- 2.0 GHz processor
- 4GB RAM with 256MB VRAM
- Dedicated graphics card

Learn more…

- www.feralinteractive.com

Available from…

- Mac App Store

The Mac is slowly stepping forward into the gaming arena as newer titles are released only a few months after their launch on the major consoles. Keeping up with this trend is Deus Ex: Human Revolution, which brings HD graphics and a see-saw story line to your Mac.

Based in 2027 Detroit, the game centres around the invention of biomechanical upgrades called augmentations that are soon to come to the fore. These augmentations allow you to upgrade your character as the story progresses, giving you access to new powers and other abilities, adding a role-playing twist to the formula. The game places a lot of emphasis on the player. There are several ways to complete the gripping story, so whether you want to head in with all guns blazing or take guards down silently, you can tailor your upgrades accordingly.

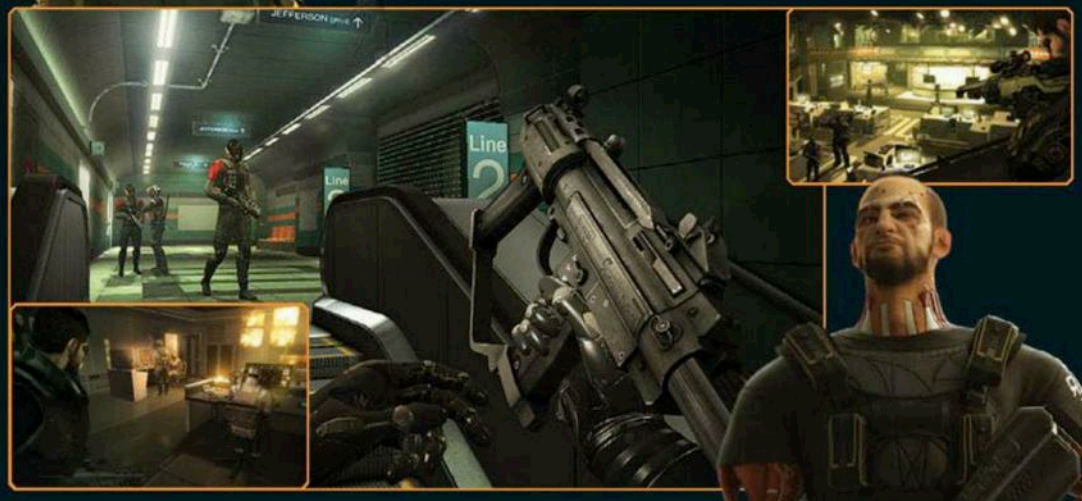
In terms of its looks, the game requires a fair bit of power and a dedicated graphics card, but uses them to their full. Everything looks fantastically futuristic, with locations that are incredibly atmospheric. The sound and lighting only help to increase the futuristic feeling, with electronic beats that swell nicely when involved in action.

At its heart, the game is a first-person shooter, but in a lot of situations the camera will zoom out into a third-person view. This type of transition works well and feels natural.

As always with games on the Mac, the controls take a little getting used to, but with so much going on we actually preferred using our keyboard and mouse over a controller. Planning moves is important but accessing every action quickly can be vital.

The story twists and turns like any great detective story, and replay value is heightened by different endings depending on your tactics. The main character, Adam, is likeable and various side-quests are available as you play through to earn extra experience and added information. There are also plenty of extras to find around the game world, with tablets and reports giving some background to the main narrative and adding a really personal aspect to working out what's going on behind all the conspiracies and misdirection.

This version of the game also includes all the downloadable content from the original game, along with a 'making of' documentary, artwork and soundtrack. The result is a fully-packed game that offers a great story, brilliant graphics and gameplay that stays fresh and interesting throughout thanks to the upgrades you can easily obtain.



Questions answered

Because we get to play with stuff before you do…

"How well does the stealth aspect of the game work, and do I have to use it?"

Stealth is brilliant thanks to the varied implementation. Sneaking around guards is present and correct, but other ways of avoiding attention include crawling through vents, and talking guards around using conversation choices or pheromones. You don't have to use stealth tactics, but there are upgrades for action, stealth and a mix of both to match your preferred style.

"It takes plenty of power. Will my machine handle it?"

You'll need to check your Mac's specs compared to the minimum specs listed on the Mac App Store. We played the game using a Core i5 iMac with 4GB RAM and everything was super smooth.



Killer feature

Story line

The graphical design is great, but the story is where the game really excels. The political background is expanded upon as you rifle through drawers to find extra evidence.

Buy now?

Pros A great-looking game that focuses on player choice and has an engaging story line

Cons You'll need a powerful machine to run Deus Ex, and the controls are complex to grasp

★★★★★

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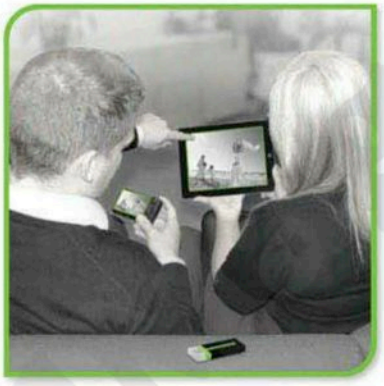
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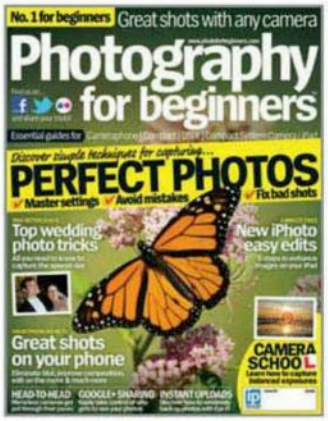
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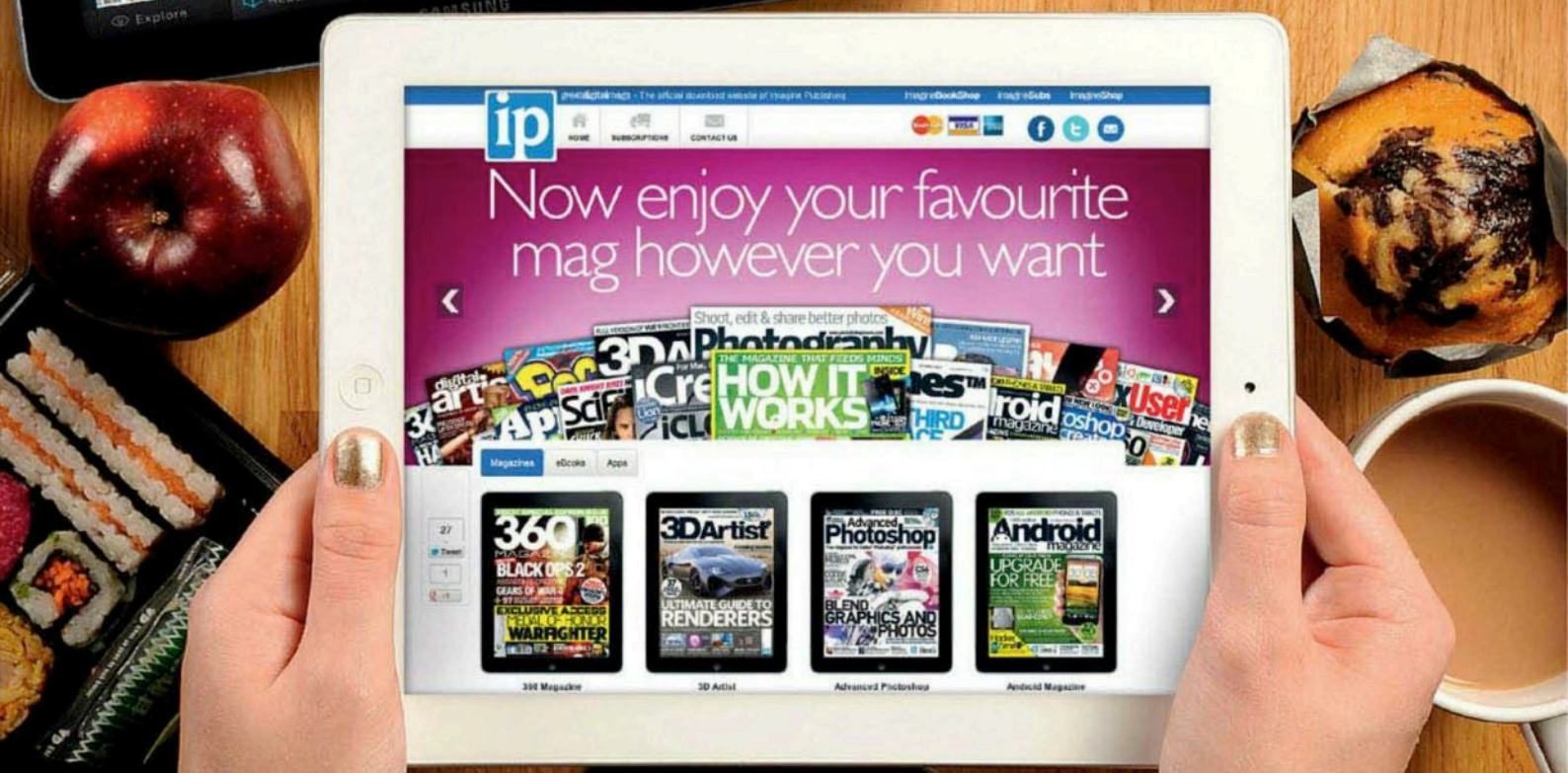
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